

MARCH, 1914

PRICE 25 CENTS

The SMART SET

*A Magazine of
Cleverness*

This Issue
Contains

**WIT
HUMOR
PATHOS
Cleverness
and
VARIETY**

Freeman Tilden
Victoria Morton
Bliss Carman
Inez Haynes Gillmore
D. H. Lawrence
Richard Le Gallienne
Joyce Kilmer



"GATHERING LAURELS"

A most important editorial
announcement by the
publisher.

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Page 159



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THE SMART SET

A MAGAZINE OF
CLEVERNESS

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THE SMART SET FOR APRIL

THE April issue of THE SMART SET will contain several innovations. In accordance with the policy outlined on Page 159 of this issue, the tone of the magazine will be lightened and more prominence given the comedy side of life.

One of the leading features will be the first half of an extraordinarily interesting two-part story by **J. D. Beresford**, one of the younger novelists and fiction writers who are now coming to the front in England. The story is called "The House in Demetrius Road." The scene is located in a suburb of London; the whole action takes place in and about a small commonplace house there; yet the story is full of movement and the interest is intense. In both plot and handling, this is one of the best stories THE SMART SET has ever brought out.

In the April number will also appear "**The Tribe**," the first story of a series of children's adventures—told in a simple, unsophisticated manner that will bring chuckles to every reader who has not forgotten that he was once a child and to every parent who does not regard children, even his own, as angels. The eternal boy is in these stories. The human touch that made "Huckleberry Finn," and "Tom Brown's School Days" so universally popular is here. This series is from the pen of **Basil McDonald Hastings**, editor of the *Bystander*, in London, and author of "The New Sin" and other recent successful plays. It will be a distinct novelty in THE SMART SET.

Max Beerbohm, popularly known as one of the three cleverest men in England, contributes "The Mobled King." In this whimsical and characteristic essay Mr. Beerbohm presents some highly original and amusing views regarding the statuary of our great cities, and makes a proposition that thousands of citizens would rejoice to see carried out. The appearance of Mr. Beerbohm's work in these pages is a dis-

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No. 3

THE SMART SET

The Magazine For Minds That Are Not Primitive

THE DEFECTIVE

By Freeman Tilden

WHEN I first saw the man, he was sitting in the office of the Mansion House, in Paulham. His chair was tipped back upon its hind legs, in the approved fashion of country hotels, and except for the fact that he was exceptionally well dressed I should have thought him a prosperous townsman, living easily upon last fall's apple crop.

He was a medium-sized fellow, smoothly and recently shaved, and he had a soft, almost timid, eye. He seemed to be moving at a refined gait, toward forty years old. He had laid out considerable money on his dress, and it made him distinguished, which is the highest office of clothes. I concluded that he must be a traveling salesman, probably in wine and spirits.

We got into conversation, and I found that my guess was bad; he lived in town. He was well read, amply informed, pleasant and easy in discourse, modest in demeanor. We exchanged cards. His name was Orville Stackwood. At half past four he took out a fine thin-model watch and named the hour, saying that he should have to be going along toward home.

"Rather nice chap," I said to the hotel clerk, after Stackwood had gone.

"Oh, yes," was the reply. "Too bad about him. He's worth a lot of money, too."

"What is too bad about him?" I asked.

The hotel clerk regarded me with that look of astonishment worn by yokels when a stranger asks to be directed to the post office. They find it difficult to believe that the location of their post office is not a matter of international interest. "He ain't quite right; didn't you know that?"

"Not quite right?" I asked. "He struck me as being all right. What's the matter with him?"

"I dunno," was the answer. "That's all I know about it. He ain't all there. He lives up to Gould's." And then he told me about the great local institution for feeble-minded persons, built and maintained by a certain philanthropist for the care of the addled rich.

I was puzzled. Then I began to see the joke. I had been talking for more than an hour with a defective, without knowing it. There may have been something tinny about my silvery laughter. It is not flattering to discover that you are capable of associating with the feeble-minded on their own terms.

In the next three days I found out a great deal about the Institution, as it was politely called by the townspeople. It was undoubtedly an institution. It dominated the village, both as the geography and sociology. Paulham is built

upon a hilltop; and on the highest point of the place, with a magnificent sweep of the surrounding country before it, is Gould's.

Gould's harbored about a hundred defectives at this time. They were the product of well-to-do people; thus it might be said that they were the pick of the country's imbeciles. Some of them, having demonstrated their incapacity for doing harm, were allowed to roam about the streets. A few went to church. I went to church one day with a friend, who pointed out three of them, sitting together in a front pew.

"What woeful faces!" I exclaimed, and then began to descant upon them, when my friend, with mild tartness, informed me that I was looking at the wrong three persons. . . . On another occasion, on the street, I mistook the president of the Paulham Bank for one of Gould's aged wards. It is a mistaken policy that permits these poor creatures to run at large among other people. It abolishes the only certain manner of identification. . . .

One day, a glorious, crisp day for walking, I met Orville Stackwood far out upon the Danwick road. He was going in the same direction and I caught up with him. He carried a fine stick, with engraved silver mounting. We walked along together for a few moments without speaking. Then I asked him: "Whereabouts in Paulham do you live?" A red flush came to his face, and instantly I felt like a cad. "At Gould's," he replied. Then he added, "The Institution, you know."

I was more puzzled than ever. That a feeble-minded person should blush at giving his correct address seemed apart from all experience. An imbecile would, on the contrary, be proud of living in the best and biggest house in town. I took courage and continued:

"You strike me as being an unusual person to be living at Gould's."

I felt safe in saying this. If he were truly feeble-minded, he could not be hurt by the bluntness, and he might be flattered.

Stackwood gave no evidence of being either flattered or hurt. He looked at

me suspiciously for a moment out of the corners of his eyes, and seemed to be thrown on the defensive. Then he replied, in monotones: "I am not quite right."

"You are not quite right?" I repeated. This was simply incredible: that a defective should realize and state his case so judicially.

Stackwood's eyes became furtive. I thought for a moment he was going to take to his heels. But he replied, steadily, "I am not quite right," and nodded his head.

Whether it was something about the man that gave the lie palpably to his assertion, and the assertion made about him; or whether it was because I felt that I had a duty toward myself to perform—to convince myself that I was not so feeble-minded as to fail to perceive what everybody else perceived; whatever the reason was, I blurted out: "Mr. Stackwood, I beg pardon; but you're no more feeble-minded than I am. You're as right as anybody. If you don't mind, what's your game?"

For a minute, I thought I had gone too far. Stackwood's face darkened. He pursed up his mouth and his fingers clenched the walking stick nervously. But just as I was ready to beat a retreat, he smiled feebly and said: "I think I can trust you."

"You certainly can," I promised.

He chafed his lower lip with his teeth. "Well, then," he said, "I *am* all right. I don't tell you because I want to; I'm afraid if I don't you'll talk. Give me your word you'll repeat to nobody in this town what I am going to tell you."

I promised again, my heart fluttering in joyous anticipation of romance.

"I *am* all right," he repeated, "though I do live at Gould's." He stopped and took thought. "You know," he went on, "if they should find out, up at the Institution, that I was all right, they wouldn't let me stay there. I'd be turned out tomorrow, money or no money." He laid his hand on my arm. "I can trust you, can't I?" And then, walking along at my side, he told me the story that follows here.

Orville Stackwood belonged to one of the oldest Massachusetts families; rich, refined, respectable. When he was five years old he was sent to a private school. There was already some doubt as to whether he was a normal child in every respect. The report of the private school was couched in the language of diplomacy, but there was no mistaking the meaning. The child was considered a defective.

It was bitter poison for the Stackwood family. There were three other children, two boys and a girl, and all rather above the normal in development. At least one of them, the oldest, named George, showed signs of brilliancy. The necessity of getting the unfortunate lad into an institution where he could be well cared for naturally suggested itself to a family with wide and high social connections. Gould's was mentioned by a friend; Orville was sent there. The family had then done its best for him. Gould's was the highest-priced institution of its kind in the country.

When the first reports came in, the Stackwood father and mother scanned them eagerly for some hint of improvement. They were disappointed. The reports held out no hope. "He makes no trouble. He is in the best of health. It will be permitted that you send him a watch, if you desire." After a few years of declining hopes, Orville was forgotten. They could not bear to see him, so he was really dead to them. When the father died of apoplexy, it was found that he had made in his will a provision for one hundred and fifty thousand dollars to be held in trust for the defective boy. A year afterward the mother died. At this time Orville was fourteen years old.

At the age of fifteen Orville began to wake up. The unaccountable barrier that had dammed the natural flow of his mentality slowly gave way. Little by little at first he learned; the momentum of his capacity for learning rapidly increased; it was thought well to retard him for his own good.

At the age of twenty Orville could read the newspapers, could figure accurately, and was as competent as the

average citizen of Paulham, though the average citizen of Paulham might not admit it. He was permitted the freedom of the village, except that he had to return to the institution by five o'clock in the afternoon. Having plenty of money at his disposal, and being of a generous disposition, he got into the habit of looking after the wants of certain needy families of the town. This trait was favorably commented on by the townspeople, though of course it strengthened the belief in his mental deficiency.

One day Dr. Richard Brownell came to Paulham to spend a two weeks' vacation at the Mansion House, whose proprietor was an old friend. Orville, then a frequenter of the hotel, met the doctor, and they talked together. When he learned that the man with whom he had been speaking was an inmate of Gould's, Dr. Brownell was first astounded and then indignant. He knew, by hearsay, of Gould's institution. And he detested such places.

These two doctors represented polarities in their judgments of mental troubles. Dr. Gould believed, in a very broad way, that all persons were more or less incompetent, and that, with the possible exception of himself and wife, they would be better off under institutional restraint. Dr. Brownell utterly disbelieved in such restraint. In his eyes all were competent, only some more competent than others. He would raze institutions to the ground.

Dr. Brownell took Orville Stackwood aside. "What are you doing up at that place?" he asked sharply.

"Why, I've always been there," was the young man's reply.

"Don't you know you're just as capable as anybody around here?" pursued the doctor. "Yes, and more so than some," he added.

The inmate of Gould's was perplexed. It was the first time anybody had suggested to him that he was capable. He began to take an interest in what this black-bearded, energetic man was saying.

Fact by fact, the doctor wormed the story of his incarceration from Orville. From time to time the doctor pounded on the arm of his chair and bounced

around upon the seat of it, making such explosive exclamations as "Damnab! outrage!" "Absolutely illegal!" "Ought to be tarred and feathered, by God!" Finally he seized his hat, planted it firmly on his head and said, "I'm going to whack you out of that place in about half a jiffy."

Orville opened his eyes wide. He began to believe that this man was in some authority. "What are you going to do?" he asked.

"Do? Do? I'm going to see your people. And then if they don't do something, I'll kidnap you."

His people! Orville Stackwood did not know them. He knew only that he had two brothers and a sister, and that they sent him something every Christmas. The one named George had sent him a cane for five Christmases running, and then, just as Orville made up his mind that he could count on a cane as long as either of them lived, the gift changed to an umbrella and had been an umbrella ever since. Thus Orville knew that George was a man with more than one idea—and that was all he knew of George.

But the young man was pleased with the idea of getting away from Gould's. He knew himself to be the possessor of a handsome income, though it was impossible that he should know the spending value of money, since he had had so little experience. As he had grown older, the feeble-minded persons around him had begun to bore him. But his attitude toward them was not the attitude of the townspeople. He said to Dr. Brownell one day:

"You see, Doctor, all of the fellows and girls up home have their little specialty—something they can do better than most other people. Some of them can make wonderful faces, some can pull carpets apart without breaking the strands, and there is one that fixed a hall clock so that it struck thirteen. And they're very easy to get along with. Only I get tired of them. So I spend most of my time in the village."

"Ah, ha!" chuckled Dr. Brownell gleefully. This was all grist for him, this information about the specialists

at Gould's. The doctor was writing a book.

The upshot of it was that Dr. Brownell spent the last three days of his vacation interviewing members of the Stackwood family. They were reluctant to order the release of Orville; not because they were not overjoyed to learn how vastly he had improved; not because they would not be delighted to have him with them; but because of that awful possibility that the young man might have a relapse and do somebody harm.

"Rot!" said the doctor. "He's as harmless as a dove."

"Is he—er—presentable—you know?" asked Arthur, the second brother.

"He is just as presentable as you are," replied the doctor, who was inclined to be choleric in the prosecution of his enthusiasms. Arthur said no more; but he felt that a man of delicacy could have phrased the thing more happily.

The burly temperament of the doctor conquered the Stackwoods, who had been in the country since 1631, and were not strong. They agreed to order Dr. Gould to send Orville home. They hoped that Dr. Gould would demur; and they hoped not in vain. Dr. Gould demurred as only a man can demur who sees part of his business in danger. Orville was one of the cornerstones of the institution. He gave it tone, he gave it esteem and he brought it money. But the doctor capitulated to his enemy Brownell, though he never met this enemy.

It being certain that Orville Stackwood must leave the institution, it became necessary to graduate him with éclat. The doctor was not a quack; he did not send out word that he had effected a cure, as some dishonest specialist might have done. He was a sincere man; he was proud of his feeble-minded charges, and he treated them well. He saw Orville leave with genuine regret. He shook hands and said, in a low voice: "If you should ever feel—uncertain—about what you want to do—a little queer—don't hesitate to come back to us, Orville." The doctor had gone as far as he professionally could, in saying that.

Orville went at once to the home of his brother Arthur.

Arthur Stackwood had married, and his home was in the best section of Boston. Strangers do not know where this section is; but the old families know, and they live there. The meeting between the two brothers was a Boston classic. It was refined and restrained, with no awkward demonstrations. But Arthur was relieved to find that his long-lost brother had no physical imperfections; that he was, in brief, a well-looking and presentable person.

Arthur had done well by his patrimony. He showed by his investments that he had inherited his father's sagacity, for they were the very solidest. He did not find it necessary to employ himself in productive labor; but a man must needs throw himself into some form of action. Arthur was considered one of the three best bridge whist players in the Eastern States.

"Do you play bridge?" was one of his first questions of his brother.

Orville had heard of the game, but it was not in vogue at Gould's. He shook his head.

Arthur looked perplexed for a moment. This was a contingency—a social disability, in fact—of which he had not thought. But he brightened up after a while and said, "You'll have to learn." He took Orville into the library and showed him his books on bridge. "This is the best book for the beginner," he advised, placing a thin volume in his brother's hands.

Though an enthusiast, Arthur displayed the characteristic Stackwood temperateness. He never played bridge before luncheon. Mrs. Arthur Stackwood was one of the best women players in the State. They earnestly tried to do their best for Orville Stackwood. They considered him, finally, recalcitrant. Several times Arthur came into the library and found Orville reading fiction. He was too courteous to say anything abrupt, but his face showed that he knew that he was in the thick of a domestic problem. The situation gradually became untenable.

The end came when Orville failed to

lead with his fourth best spade one evening in a little informal affair at the Stackwood home.

Next day Orville went to live with his sister.

Kathryn Stackwood had married Phillips Brice, of the Brices of Stonedale. It was a love match; money was no object on either side. She was a charming woman, four years older than Orville; her husband weighed one hundred and twenty pounds, wore a drooping mustache and collected postage stamps. He had the best collection of Indo-China revenue issues ever brought together in the United States. A British collector, hearing of the Brice collection, had journeyed to this country in a wheel chair to see it, and had died on the way home—of a broken heart, it is said. Mr. Brice also had a Canadian stamp without perforations on the side.

Orville was well received at his sister's house. Brice took a strong fancy to him. Before the first day was over he presented his brother-in-law with a rare Bermuda stamp, with which to start a collection. "But remember to specialize," he warned Orville. "Most collectors fail in trying to cover too much ground. Don't get side-tracked. I made the mistake once of trying to collect New South Wales in addition to my Indo-China. But I saw my mistake in time."

On one occasion Mr. Brice came home in a state of pure intoxication—of a non-alcoholic kind. "What do you think of that?" he asked of Orville, laying a stamp on the table in front of him.

"Fine," said Orville. "What is it?"

"You wouldn't know at first," was the reply. "It's an Indo-China, with the gum on the wrong side. I got it from a man that didn't know its true value. It cost me only two hundred dollars."

"Bully for you," said Orville, always anxious to please.

Mrs. Brice was not at home much. She was working for the suffrage. At first it had pained the other members of the family to learn that their sister was speaking to variegated groups of persons on street corners, by the light

of a gasoline torch; but when they found out that other influential women were in the movement, they said no more. Brice never said much about it. He found it best to acquiesce without words. He was a kind-hearted, generous little man, and when asked to parade in favor of votes for women, he paraded. In one parade he was annoyed by a number of tomatoes thrown from the sidewalk, but he suffered no complaint to escape him.

Orville tried honestly to become interested in the life work of his hosts, and resorted to cunning simulations of enthusiasm, but without much success. He was not willing, however, to parade. There was something stubborn about him. He did not like the idea of parading for the female ballot, and he said so.

Brice took Orville aside and stroked him on the subject. He did not want any trouble. He had come to like his brother-in-law and liked to have him around. "It's not an important matter," he said. "I parade, you know."

Orville became exasperated. "Those who wish to parade may parade," he replied. "I don't."

Soon afterward he went to live with his brother George.

George, as Orville knew, was the flower of the family. He remembered hearing—just where or when he did not know—that in George Stackwood the family had touched the heights. He had been graduated from Harvard with honors. It was George Stackwood who had tackled Willstach, the Princeton quarterback, on Harvard's five-yard line, in the last ten seconds of play. Every year, since that time, the papers printed his picture.

George had not married, in spite of his widely known eligibility. He lived in a sumptuous bachelor apartment house that reminded Orville of the Arabian Nights. Every improvement that had been suggested to the human mind toward the abolition of effort was installed in this house. It was operated with buttons. One button would procure more heat, another more drinks. The heating arrangements were almost perfect.

After a year or two with automobiles, during which he had gained much publicity by driving a mile on a straight track in twenty-six seconds, whereas the best former amateur record had been twenty-six and one-eighth, George had now gone in for aviation; and at the time his brother came to live with him, the sport was occupying all his waking hours. He was, at the moment, preparing to volplane with the machine flying upside down. In aviation circles it was generally admitted that the success of this experiment would mean much to science.

"I'm mighty glad to see you," was the hearty greeting of George. "You probably know I'm all tied up with flying, but I want you to make yourself just as much at home as though you'd always been here."

"Thank you," replied Orville gratefully.

"Tomorrow I'll take you out to my hangar," he added. Then he explained, seeing that the word was new to his brother: "The place where I keep my birds."

"I'd like to see it," said Orville.

"Then, next week some time," went on the aviator, as though determined to carry hospitality and family loyalty to the highest point, "I'll take you for a ride in my new biplane."

"Me?" asked Orville.

"Certainly. There's room for a passenger. To tell the truth, Orville, I'm mighty glad you've come. I've been wanting to try out some little ideas of mine about carrying passengers, and you're the very one to help me."

"Are these ideas—er—new ones?" asked Orville, after a little hesitation.

"Comparatively," replied the brother, suppressing an honest pride.

Orville shuddered; his brother did not observe it. "I'll make a regular J. K. Burke of you," said George with a smile.

"Who was J. K. Burke?" asked Orville.

"Never heard of him? One of the greatest aviators that ever lived. Was killed at Moscow last July. Fell four thousand feet."

"I should prefer to be like you,

George," said Orville naively. "You're still alive."

George laughed heartily. "Good!" he cried, clapping Orville on the back. "I'll tell that at the club."

Next day Orville went out to the aviation grounds with his brother. From beginning to end he felt like a man struggling to awake from a dream; fighting to push away the veil of unreality and come back to the earth he knew—the earth of Dr. Gould's institution with its hundred inmates, all specialists.

These specialists of aviation, clothed in fantastic garb, were tinkering with their great flyers; speeding them along upon their bicycle wheels; leaping off into the air; skittering down the course about fifteen feet from the ground; sailing away into the blue heavens above. And all this with the same nonchalance with which Orville had walked down the main street of Paulham, swinging his stick. The visitor expected to see somebody killed that afternoon, but nobody so much as had his clothing damaged. Still, Orville had an unpleasant mental picture, that gradually grew into an obsession, of J. K. Burke falling four thousand feet at Moscow. The more he thought of the sport, the less he liked it.

Several nights afterward George said: "Tomorrow, if it isn't too windy, we'll try out some of those little ideas of mine."

"Tomorrow," repeated Orville, growing cold.

"Yes, about half past one, if you don't mind. I wish you'd come right out to the hangar, if you shouldn't hear from me. . . . And, by the way, Orville, I've been planning a little surprise for you. There's a young lady I want you to meet. She's just the—well, you can judge for yourself. I don't want to advise anybody. But you'll like her. Her name is Williamson—Alice Williamson—college girl—up to date—Gibson type, all that sort of thing. I want to take you around tomorrow night, after we finish our afternoon's sport."

Orville showed a natural interest. "That's mighty good of you," he said. Then he sat in deep thought for a

moment. "Does she play bridge?" he asked suddenly.

"Bully little player, I understand."

A faint tinge of red came into Orville's cheeks.

"She—do you think she's interested in the—er—suffrage, George?"

"Well, I should say so. She's been in court twice for obstructing traffic," replied George enthusiastically.

Orville gulped. "Maybe," he said, "she collects postage stamps?"

"I don't think so," said George. "But I heard somebody say she's interested in very old sugarbowls. By gracious, she's just the girl for you, do you know!"

Orville rose from his chair and came over to his brother. His eyes were full of resignation; his cheeks, from having been flushed, had now gone pale. "You want me to be at the hangars at one thirty tomorrow, George?"

"Yes, if you will."

"I'll be there," said Orville, extending a hand.

"Good for you," replied George.

Orville kept his word. The next afternoon he was on hand promptly. He had thought it all over the night before, and decided that it didn't make much difference anyway. So far as he could see, the intense specialization of the life into which he had entered was not likely ever to prove attractive to him. He had put his small affairs in order, laid out clean linen for the morrow, and had then peacefully gone to sleep.

George wanted Orville to don an aviation costume, but the latter refused. He did not have any special reason for refusing; simply he did not fancy the idea. He had no great sensation as he clambered into the seat behind his brother. Whatever he had had of fear had resolved itself into curiosity. Besides, he had a plan. The plan was to be executed in case the aviation experiments did not prove immediately fatal, as they had in the case of J. K. Burke, in Moscow.

The biplane was got into position on the cinder track in front of the hangars, and all was in readiness. The engine started. There was a swishing of air behind; the machine began to move

along the ground slowly. "Ready?" asked George.

Orville replied in the affirmative.

Suddenly the speed was accelerated, and then, with no perceptible strain, Orville felt himself lifted into the air. He looked down quickly and saw the cinder path dropping out from under him. Something heavy was laid upon his stomach, and at the same time his breath began to come in small gusts. In another moment they were speeding along, not more than fifty feet from the ground. They circled the field a couple of times, and then alighted without a jar. "She's working beautifully," was George's comment. "Now where would you like to go—any particular place?"

"I'd like to go out Paulham way," was the ready reply.

"Out Paulham way? I should think—" George got as far as that when he caught himself. He hastened to add: "All right. But I'm not sure of the direction."

"It's on the line of the B. C. & M., you know," suggested Orville.

"Oh, yes, I know—just beyond the Templeport Inn."

Orville nodded. "I'd like to see what it looks like around there from above," he explained.

In a few moments they were off. The biplane ascended to a height of two hundred feet, and skimmed along smoothly at that altitude for several miles. George turned his head, and his brother leaned close to catch the words. "We'll go up a little, eh?"

Orville, at the moment, had a vision of the young woman that played bridge, obstructed traffic and collected old sugarbowl. "Good!" he cried in reply. And they soared upward.

Suddenly Orville bawled, joyously: "I see it! I see the Institution!" George did not hear. His brother touched him on the arm and pointed to a cluster of buildings topping a hill to their right. "Over there I used to live," said Orville shamelessly.

Mademoiselle Chance played the next card. The engine began to miss explosions, and George, selecting a level open field, came down to earth to make an examination. As the biplane stopped moving, Orville sprang out and began to run. He heard his brother cry, "Where are you going?" but he paid no attention. There was a clump of woods on the edge of the field, and he made for the trees. Once out of sight, he began to walk, but he walked rapidly.

Twice he lost his direction, and stumbled aimlessly around in the forest, his clothing suffering from the bushes that reached out upon him. A low-hanging limb caught his hat and retained it. He went on without it. When he came out at last upon a highway, he recognized it as a little-traveled road that went up through Leesville, to Paulham.

It was nearly dark when Orville entered the outskirts of Paulham. Kerosene eyes were beginning to wink in the houses ahead of him. Half an hour later he entered the beautiful grounds of the Institution. He went straight to the house of Dr. Gould, ran up the steps lightly and rang. He saw the doctor himself rise and come toward the door.

When the door opened the two men regarded each other swiftly. Orville's clothes, which had been new the week before, were rumpled and torn; he was hatless, and there were spots of dried blood on his face, where the bushes had scratched him. But there was a radiant smile on his face.

"I'm back, Doctor!" he cried.

"Orville Stackwood! What's the matter? How did you get here?"

"In an aeroplane," replied Orville.

The doctor raised his eyebrows. "An aeroplane?" he repeated. Then he shook his head slightly. He took Orville's hand gently in his own and murmured: "Poor boy! I thought you'd come back!"



A WILL is a dead man's opportunity to punish the living.

THE WEED'S COUNSEL

By Bliss Carman

S AID a traveler on the way,
Pausing, "What hast thou to say,
Flower by the dusty road,
That would ease a mortal's load?"

"Traveler, harken unto me!
I will tell thee how to see
Beauties in the earth and sky
Hidden from the careless eye.
I will tell thee how to hear
Nature's music wild and clear—
Songs of morning and of dark
Such as many never mark,
Lyrics of creation sung
Ever since the world was young.

"And thereafter thou shalt know
Neither weariness nor woe.

"Thou shalt see the dawn unfold
Magic of sheer rose and gold,
And the sunbeams on the sea
Dancing with the wind for glee.
The red lilies of the moors
Shall be torches by thy doors,
Where the field lark lifts his cry
To rejoice the passer-by,
In a wide world rimmed with blue
Lovely as when time was new.

"And thereafter thou shalt fare,
Light of foot and free from care.

"I will teach thee how to find
Lost enchantments of the mind
All about thee, never guessed
By indifferent unrest.
Thy distracted thought shall learn
Patience from the roadside fern,
And a sweet philosophy
From the flowering locust tree,

THE SMART SET

While thy heart shall not disdain
Consolations of the rain.

"Not an acre but shall give
Of its strength to help thee live.

"With the many-wintered sun
Shall thy hardy course be run,
And the bright new moon shall be
A lamp to thy felicity.
When green-mantled spring shall come
Past thy door with flute and drum,
And when over wood and swamp
Autumn trails her scarlet pomp,
No misgiving thou shalt know,
Passing glad to rise and go.

"So thy days shall be unrolled
Like a wondrous cloth of gold.

"When gray twilight with her star
Makes a heaven that is not far,
Touched with shadows and with dreams,
Thou shalt hear the woodland streams
Singing through the starry night
Holy anthems of delight.
So the ecstasy of earth
Shall refresh thee as at birth,
And thou shalt arise each morn
Radiant with a soul reborn.

"And this wisdom of a day
None shall ever take away.

"What the secret, what the clew
The wayfarer must pursue?
Only one thing he must have
Who would share these transports brave.
Love within his heart must dwell
Like a bubbling roadside well,
Like a spring to quicken thought,
Else my counsel comes to nought.
For without that primal trust,
We are less than roadside dust.

"This, O traveler, is the creed
And the wisdom of the weed!"

But the traveler's eyes afar
Sought where lost horizons are,
Lighted by an inward gleam
And the splendor of a dream.

THE WHIRLPOOL

By Victoria Morton

"MY memory is failing," said the Judge. "I fear that they are commenting upon it in court."

"Why didn't you come to me before?" said the eminent alienist abruptly.

"You know my dislike of doctors and drugs. If we hadn't been old friends I wouldn't be here now, noted authority though you are, Comyns."

"Are you lying to yourself or to me?" said Doctor Comyns calmly, gazing straight into his eyes; and then went on quickly, before the other could reply: "You came because you were driven by necessity; you came as your last hope of salvation. You are going to pieces, mentally, morally and physically."

The Judge lowered his head in silent confession. "What eyes you have!" he said plaintively, after a moment. "Cold, penetrating and absolutely merciless. You ought to have been the judge, not I. You could see the suffering of the criminal in the dock while every detail of his crime is rehearsed; you could see the desperation with which he makes his last fight and the despair in the wretch's face as you deliver the verdict. You could see all that unmoved, without feeling the weight of his misery crushing your own soul."

The physician mixed a few drops from a small vial in a tumbler of water. "Drink this," he said.

The Judge swallowed the draught, the hand which held the glass shaking. With his other hand he caught at the doctor's arm.

"Comyns, something has come over me lately—I am not myself—queer thoughts go through my brain—"

"Your entire nervous system is deranged. You have lost your mental poise," said the other cheerfully.

"Exactly," said the Judge. "Gradually, I am losing my convictions. Everything is topsy-turvy—everything appears wrong. My brain is torn with doubts. My voice no longer carries sincerity to the jury. The ground upon which I have stood so long is crumbling beneath my feet."

"Most men get to this stage, sooner or later," said the doctor.

"It has been an awful year, Comyns," said the Judge.

"Yes, it has been an unprecedented year—for crime," assented Comyns thoughtfully.

"And never as this year has the criminal made such an appeal to my humanity—never has the man in me so much taken precedence over the judge—never has the inadequacy of our present system of criminal punishment been brought so deeply home."

"And behold the result," said Comyns significantly.

"The men who come before me have been driven by overwhelming forces, whose power I can only dimly comprehend. The terrible currents of human nature, Comyns, are never reckoned with—"

"The great machine of criminal law must not be hampered by sociological theories," quoted the doctor pointedly, from a recent paragraph in a leading daily, criticising the Judge. "Its fundamental principle is to detect, prosecute and convict."

"Take Brettner," said the Judge.

"The failure of your experiment in his case was conclusive," said the doctor

quickly, his hand on the Judge's pulse. "Generally speaking, benevolence from the tribunal of justice is all very well for the individual case, but it lessens its efficiency in the service of society. It diminishes the fear of the criminal for the law. I am with the majority against you, Judge."

"In suspending Brettner's sentence, I exercised my prerogative. My study of the case had given me a knowledge which my critics could not have the desire or the opportunity to obtain."

The doctor eyed him incredulously. "Richard Brettner is captured after a series of daring burglaries. He was no ordinary burglar; he had once studied law. You suspend sentence on this most promising specimen, and society is once more menaced with this fine combination of brain and daring. Three months after the salutary address with which you closed his trial, Colonel Warren, our esteemed friend, is found dead—his safe opened and rifled of his dead wife's jewels. They had been lying in the safety vault for years, but the Colonel had just had them reset and polished. I suppose you know that Ned Warren, his nephew, is just engaged, and it was a natural surmise that the Colonel intended the jewels as a wedding present."

"No—I was not aware of this circumstance," said the Judge, who seemed a little bored by Comyns's recapitulation.

"Our friend Brettner, having recovered his freedom, was not long in putting his astute wits to work. You saved him for great things. Those jewels would have netted him a comfortable income for the rest of his life. But to dispose of them, one by one, carefully covering up his tracks, would have taxed even his brain."

"Brettner does not possess the qualities of cunning and craft with which you credit him," said the Judge. "He is a tool in the hands of older men, who have backed him by their experience while they make use of his strength and nerve."

The doctor looked interested. "However—the fact remains," he said.

"Three months after you suspend his sentence, he is captured again, and indicted for murder. Naturally, you are condemned unmercifully by press and public."

The Judge nodded indifferently. "Brettner was a handsome fellow, Comyns," he said. "A head beautifully modeled, like a young Antinous. I listened to an inner voice which seemed to say: 'The stamp of God is on him. Don't brand him a felon. The prison deteriorates blood and bone and muscle; it atrophies—enervates. The prison is a disease.' So I gave him a chance."

"He betrayed you," said Comyns.

"There was a force working against me with him," said the Judge bitterly, "a force against which I was powerless; and, I realize now, against which Brettner was powerless."

"A woman in the case, eh?" said Comyns sharply. "Now I reflect, I did see a mention of her in some of the papers."

"To my surprise. It was suppressed in most of them," said the Judge. "But Brettner's father, who defended him in court, made it plain that his son was not a thief by nature. He had worked his way through college and was practising as a lawyer when he met this woman, the most abandoned of her class, and became obsessed by her, body and soul. He stole to satisfy her cravings. And it was also plain that he had been influenced by a criminal gang, some members of which had engaged him to defend them in the petty courts. But Brettner's attitude was most peculiar. He had an air of superb defiance. He seemed to look down on us all, even upon me, the judge, from some superior height. He breathed a rarefied air, created by his own ecstasy. His old father pleading—the disgrace—were nothing; he gloried in his love for this woman."

"Rather interesting, from a criminologist's point of view," said Comyns. "I should like to examine him!"

"You will find no criminal tendency. There was an overwhelming motive," said the Judge.

"The demands of a woman of the

parasite type are insatiable," remarked Comyns. He smiled as he saw that the Judge's nerves were relaxing under the effect of the drug he had given him. "Morality, standards, every fine sense, sunk in a blind passion for a worthless object," he added.

"But think what it means," reiterated the Judge. "Forgetfulness, oblivion from the thoughts that torment, the problem to which there is no solution—rest—from this." He tapped his forehead significantly. "What did you give me in that glass, Comyns? I haven't felt so calm for months."

"It's not necessary for you to know."

"I have often been tempted to take some drug in order to obtain a little temporary peace."

"Take nothing but what I prescribe. The shattered wrecks who come in here to me daily are the result of such impulses. And the blind passion for a woman, as in the case of Brettner, is just as demoralizing, as slowly undermining, as any drug."

II

"It's a clear case of brain fag," said the doctor briskly, after an interval of time during which the Judge had been subjected to a strict general examination, followed by a series of brain tests. "No doubt owing to the strain of the past year. You have had no let-up of any kind since last October. It is now the end of May. You have not learned the art of forgetting yourself, temporarily, like most men. Have you been dreaming much lately?" he asked practically.

"Always," answered the Judge slowly. "Confused, fragmentary dreams. Last night I saw a seething whirlpool in which men and women were struggling madly, and, Comyns, the faces of the drowning ones were familiar—men I had sentenced—some dead—some now in prison—and there was one woman's face that I thought marvelously beautiful—I have been trying to recall it all day but it has escaped me. I saw them all sucked under by the whirlpool, and I stood by,

powerless—one cry to God, and they were gone."

"That dream is the natural result of the problems upon which you have been brooding," said the doctor. "In your attempt to save, you will yourself be dragged into the whirlpool," he added prophetically. "Let your experiment in the Brettner case be a warning. Your health has been shattered upon this rock. You must change your habit of thought—your whole system of living." I would not wait until court closes, but throw up everything and go away—at once. A few months' rest and change—I will outline a programme later; then"—a humorous gleam appeared in the doctor's eyes—"you should marry. How did you intend to spend the summer this year?" he inquired abruptly.

"The Weatherbees had invited me to Bar Harbor," said the Judge consciously.

"Ah—that means Priscilla. No, friendship entails arduous claims which you are in no position to satisfy. You must go to some out-of-the-way spot where you won't meet a soul you know."

"I am no longer a young man—I need the physical comforts," demurred the Judge.

"By all means," replied Comyns indulgently. "There is a small camp situated on a lake in the North Woods where I occasionally send patients. It is a wild spot, several miles from the station. The camp is kept by an old guide. He is bound to treat my patients well, for he is dependent upon me for patrons. The place is practically unknown. You won't be bothered by many visitors. One of my assistants, a young Russian, is there now, tenting with a young college chap. So you won't lack medical advice, and I will write to Wissotzky concerning you—"

"But I don't want him fussing over me," said the Judge childishly.

"No, no," said the doctor soothingly. "He's simply there if you need him. You'll have the best of food, I promise you that, and the lake is not fished out."

The alienist wrote some directions on a pad, tore off the leaf and handed it to the Judge.

"Here are all your directions—Hal-

lam's camp—this is the station—I will notify Hallam. You must make it possible to leave on this date," leaning over the Judge's shoulder and tapping the paper. "Take this train—change here."

He took out his watch, looked at it sharply, then held out his hand. "Now, good-bye and good luck."

III

WHEN Judge Revercombe had left, Comyns rang a bell on his table. The man who attended the door answered.

"Tell Doctor Wissotzky I wish to see him."

A moment later a tall young man entered with a noiseless step. He had a pale face, trained by long usage with Doctor Comyns's methods into absolute expressionlessness. His narrow black eyes were habitually half closed. He wore a pointed dark brown beard, his lips were thick, slightly sensual, and he had large, powerful-looking hands. His whole physique gave an impression of enormous physical strength, but his movements were surprisingly light and noiseless. Doctor Comyns relied upon him absolutely.

"Wissotzky," said Comyns, in his dry, brisk manner, "you are run down! I am going to send you off at once to the North Woods. In fact, you are there now, tenting with another young chap."

Wissotzky showed his white teeth in a broad smile.

"I am there now—and who are the patients?"

"For the present—Arthur Hallway. I wish to cultivate his initiative. He has been pampered and kept down too much. He will travel alone—but, as there is only one tent available at the camp, you will ask permission to share it. Encourage physical exercise, compatible with his strength. Treat him as an equal. His weakness is bound, after a time, to cling to your strength. I have great hopes for him after this summer. If you succeed in making Arthur a man, I need not tell you that, should you desire to spend the rest of your days

in philosophical abstractions, Hallway Senior would enable you to do so."

Wissotzky shrugged his shoulders indifferently. "And who is the other patient?"

"Judge Revercombe, of the Criminal Court."

An expression of keen interest lightened for the moment Wissotzky's impenetrable mask.

"The Judge is to be under close surveillance. I am uncertain about him. I would keep him here under my own observation, but I am relying in a measure upon nature. He has an abstemious life behind him. Nature may work a miracle, but his condition at present is critical. His will never be a chronic case: he will either establish his balance or—topple over."

"You really, then, consider the Judge's case hopeless," said Wissotzky.

"No!" thundered the doctor. "I did not say that. I place my faith on the unexpected. He is too fine a man to go under—he must be saved."

Hallam's camp, in the most unfrequented part of the North Woods, was filled in summer with well to do people who dressed for dinner, and discussed one another's peculiarities as they do in most summer hotels. There were usually a couple of doctors, ostensibly on their vacation. It was the ideal Adirondack camp, where the simple life went hand in hand with excellent cooking.

IV

"How perfectly awful that he should have broken down like this!" said Mrs. Weatherbee. She had just finished reading aloud, over the coffee urn, a letter from the Judge telling of his illness and his regret that he could not spend a month with them at Bar Harbor, as he had planned.

"Too bad, too bad," said the General, stirring his eggs vigorously.

"I had quite made up my mind that things would be settled definitely this summer," said Mrs. Weatherbee with a sigh.

"It does not follow, my dear, that be-

cause you have settled something satisfactorily in your mind, the thing is necessarily accomplished."

His smiling good humor, the slightly sarcastic inflection of his voice irritated Mrs. Weatherbee.

"You forget, General, that Priscilla is not getting any younger," she said.

"Am I likely to forget, my dear, one of the indubitable facts of nature? Are any of us getting any younger? Why should a universal law make an exception in favor of Priscilla? Because she is your niece?"

"The poor, dear Judge! To think of his going away alone like that! If I had only known it in time, I would have insisted upon his coming here."

"And you would have sent for Priscilla to help you nurse him—that's what you're thinking, eh? As if there were any power on earth that would induce Comyns to change his mind!"

"That fiend of a Comyns sending him to some God-forsaken place, away from every soul he knows! He hasn't even given us an address."

"Oh, the reporters will ferret it out, don't worry, my dear! You'll see it all in the paper tomorrow with full particulars. They won't let the Judge off so easily, after having cut such a figure in the newspapers lately."

"One would think his best friends had the first right to know," said Mrs. Weatherbee indignantly. "But it's all Comyns's doings."

"There's a reason for this breakdown of the Judge," said the General. "I'm afraid that Brettner fellow is at the bottom of it all. Although the Judge appears to be indifferent to criticism, I believe he holds himself responsible for the death of the Colonel."

"And well he may," said Mrs. Weatherbee. "I haven't recovered from the shock of it yet. To think that only last summer the Colonel was sitting with us at this very table," and Mrs. Weatherbee dabbed her eyes with her dainty handkerchief.

"Don't, my dear," said the General, genuinely distressed. "Brettner will get his deserts this time, if that's any comfort to you. Of course there wasn't the

slightest mark of violence upon the Colonel's body, and the verdict of the coroner was instantaneous death from heart disease."

"Brought on by the excitement of a burglary in his house," said Mrs. Weatherbee sharply. "Brettner is responsible for his death. Oh, by the way, has he confessed what he did with the jewels? The last report before we left New York was that they found only a few on him when he was captured."

"That was contradicted later. It seems there is only a single stone missing, but that, by the way, is an emerald of great value. Brettner disclaims all knowledge of it, and it was not found in the safe, nor is it in the possession of the jeweler who gave the inventory. The police say Brettner had no time to dispose of it, as he was coming directly from the Colonel's house when they caught him. It was an heirloom originally worn as a pendant by the Colonel's mother, and as a brooch by his wife, who was a Goring. In resetting the jewels, the Colonel had it suspended from a platinum invisible chain as a lavallière. My opinion is that it will never be found."

"Well, at all events, this will cure the Judge from further experiments," said Mrs. Weatherbee. "He will be glad to renounce those absurd theories you and he are always discussing."

"Theories are all very well, my dear, as long as they are not taken seriously. The trouble with the Judge is that he believed in his theories."

"What would become of us all? Where is the protection for society," cried Mrs. Weatherbee shrilly, "if criminals should be let loose among us, to demonstrate the theory that human nature can be trusted?"

"Well—now, the Judge has had his fling—and paid the cost—he will be a fit subject for matrimony," said the General, helping himself to a generous portion of marmalade.

"It's a mystery to me why he has waited so long," said Mrs. Weatherbee. "Could he make a wiser choice than Priscilla?"

V

"THERE are black flies here," wrote the Judge to Doctor Comyns. "They annoy the life out of me. They are worse than the petty lawyers in court. The woods enclose me like a prison. It is beastly cold. There is nothing to be seen. The fish don't bite. I sleep, but I awake unrefreshed. Sometimes I think I am going out of my mind. If I could only stop thinking. Can't you give me something to stop me thinking? You have made a mistake in your treatment. If you had let me go to the Weatherbees I would have had more distraction. I long for a good sea breeze and a dip in the surf. There's something queer about that assistant of yours. He's always bobbing up in unexpected places. He doesn't seem to have any repose at all—nerves, I suppose."

The Judge sat up on the balcony at Hallam's camp, knitting his forehead over the answer to the above letter.

"You will get used to the black flies. Keep on the water and fish, even if they don't bite. Your criticism of my treatment is foolish and undignified. Give an eye to Wissotzky, poor fellow. You will find him quite companionable."

It was the first time in his life the Judge had really rested. He had always worked at pleasure in his flying trips to Europe and his visits at the country houses of friends. And after he had written to Comyns complaining that he needed distraction, he realized that he was quite in the wrong. There were a Mrs. Durant and her daughter staying at the camp. They intended later on to go to a more fashionable place. Mrs. Durant had spoken to the Judge the night before, mentioning many mutual friends, chief among whom were the Weatherbees. And the conversation had exhausted him to the limit of endurance. He was obliged to confess to himself that Comyns was right. He was not fit to go among his fellow creatures.

Mrs. Durant and her daughter were sitting not far away from him on the balcony, and he knew they would be

glad if he joined them. He had no desire to do so. They held no interest for him. He was merely annoyed that he could not escape the world even here in the woods.

Mrs. Durant prided herself on being a cultured woman. She had kept herself well posted in her isolation, so she could talk well, even brilliantly, but it had been difficult for him the night before to concentrate his mind sufficiently on what she said to give her a logical answer. She had even been anxious to discuss the Brettner case with him, having followed it with much interest. But just then Wissotzky had fortunately come to his rescue, suavely remarking that the Judge looked tired from his long day's fishing, and he felt bound to exercise his professional prerogative and order him to bed.

The Judge had ceased his querulous demand for his paper and his mail. It had not been met with the slightest argument, but it had awakened no signs of activity. The mail lay at the station until it was necessary to get supplies. For mail was not considered of importance to Doctor Comyns's patients. They were supposed to be better off without it. There was never any sign of life about the camp except at meal time. The silence of the woods lay upon all things like a spell of enchantment.

The letter which the Judge held was the only one he had received from Comyns, and he had written every day, feverishly describing his symptoms. He had laid weight to Hallam on the importance of these letters, insisting on their immediate despatch, and Hallam had seemed duly impressed, to the effect that the letters were all given to Wissotzky to read at his leisure. For most of Doctor Comyns's patients wrote important letters, which were to be despatched without delay.

"Patience! Patience!" were the concluding words of Comyns's letter. The Judge sighed, letting his head droop forward on his breast. He would be patient, but he felt hopeless. He had a growing longing to get away from himself. The burden of thought was becoming intolerable; his brain felt crushed

by its weight, and he heard a roaring in his ears like that of a lashing sea, whose waves mounted ever higher and higher, until they threatened to submerge him absolutely.

"The Judge must really be very ill," whispered Elsie Durant to her mother. "He looks exhausted, so early in the morning."

"He made a terrible mistake," whispered Mrs. Durant. "The death of Colonel Warren is preying on his mind. We must try to cheer him up."

"Will you please have my trunk taken upstairs?"

The Judge lifted his head.

It was a new voice, a woman's voice, clear and carrying, without being at all loud. The inflection was pleading, as of a person asking a favor rather than conveying an order.

He had seen the owner of the trunk arrive that morning in the rude mountain buckboard, which they used to go to and from the station. A shivering figure in a shapeless traveling coat with a heavy veil over her face, she had jumped down from the high buckboard with a light grace at which the Judge wondered vaguely at the time, thinking also that here was another woman to pry at him, another woman who would want to talk to him about the Brettner case. However, Billings, the Judge's regular guide, had no intention of leaving him much longer to his thoughts. He was only allowing him a stipulated rest after meals.

The Judge spent the rest of the morning upon the lake, fishing. There was no sun, and the fish were biting. But the Judge had ceased to care. When it was necessary to move, he felt hardly able to push the oars as Billings directed him. Billings looked at him shrewdly. This was one of the worst cases he had seen at the camp.

Suddenly the Judge's line quivered, but the Judge, sunk in thought, paid no attention. Down, down in the glossy depths of the lake he suddenly saw faces floating. One floated nearer than the other, gazing up at him with sightless eyes. It was Danvers, a man he had sentenced for the murder of his wife, and

who had been electrocuted a few weeks before.

The Judge started, leaning over the side until the light boat tipped with his weight.

"Steady!" cried Billings.

The Judge looked at him wildly, wiping the cold perspiration from his forehead. Billings, feeling slightly apprehensive, now gave him the distinction of being the very worst case he had seen in his experience.

The fishing was undoubtedly the best the season had yet afforded. The Judge had once been an ardent fisherman, but the silvery, speckled, leaping trout had no longer the power to draw him from himself. He was held tightly in the grip of a sudden horror, and he could not shake it off. His will power was gone.

Billings gave him a curt order, which he obeyed meekly, with ashen face and trembling fingers. And from that time the guide shrewdly compelled his attention, keeping him busy until the noon hour. The Judge had lost all initiative, but he was dumbly grateful for the tasks imposed, which saved him in some slight measure from himself.

As the Judge rowed slowly homeward, Billings spied a figure strolling behind the bushes of the nearest shore, and he made a furtive sign.

While the Judge rowed mechanically, he was thinking. All his life unfolded before him with the machinelike regularity of a cinematograph. He had asked of life nothing for himself. All the efforts of his brain had been for the crushed, the struggling and the sinning. Comyns's words returned to him: "No one will be saved, and you yourself will be dragged into the whirlpool." But, then, it had been too late. Comyns had erred in his diagnosis, or perhaps Comyns had lied to him, for how could his old friend look him in the face and tell him the truth? A vague, nameless dread which had sometimes fastened upon him during the last few months had become a reality.

The Judge suddenly straightened himself in his seat and threw back his shoulders. The alternative of a merci-

ful oblivion had suddenly suggested itself. As the boat's keel grated upon the landing Wissotzky seemed to rise out of the earth. He was breathing a little heavily from his race with the boat. He helped the Judge to rise, looking at him strangely. The horror had not yet frozen from his face, and Wissotzky knew its meaning.

Hallam put the trout they had caught into the Judge's hand, and he walked up the trail to the camp, holding the mess, Wissotzky following closely.

The Durants were sitting at one end of the long veranda, and they gave an enthusiastic cry when they saw the big catch in the Judge's hand.

He raised his eyes, and they fell on a woman's face, smiling on him as he mounted the steps. She smiled as anyone would smile at the fisherman coming home with his spoils. But the Judge stared back unbelievably. Failing to associate the face with the guest who had arrived that morning, he wondered whether this, too, was but a creation of his mind. The sweetness of her smile greeting him after the horror he had just lived through gave him such a blessed momentary relief that he would have prolonged his gaze indefinitely, oblivious of the others, of Wissotzky waiting gravely at his left hand, and the Durants on his right. But the new guest spoke, breaking the spell.

"How beautiful they are!" she said, in the same rich, carrying tones he had heard in the morning, the tone which was half a caress, and with an inflection which was vaguely foreign. "What a pity—" She bent forward to look at the trout, and the Judge held them up nearer for her inspection.

"Yes, it is a pity," he answered vaguely.

Her eyes smiled back at him. The Judge looked down into them, and they held him. Finally she drew back, dropping her long lashes, and the Judge returned to himself with a feeling of surprise and a sensation of disappointment, as though he had just returned from a long journey of exploration without finding what he had sought; and with the desire to seek again and again.

Suddenly he realized that the woman into whose eyes he had been gazing was a stranger, and he became aware of the others.

He bowed to the lady with punctilious courtesy and carried the trout within, where Hallam relieved him of them. Then he went slowly upstairs to his room, oblivious of Wissotzky, who followed.

When the Judge had walked up the trail from the boathouse, it was with a clear intent. He remembered it now, and he went to his traveling bag, from which he took a small leather pistol case. He had planned it all out. He was to go for a walk where the woods were thickest, away from the house where the women would not hear—and there he would be found, later—Judge Revercombe's career ended, his task unfinished, his efforts, his aspirations for the criminal come to nothing, but the torment of thought stilled forever—so easily. And now—

He opened the case and looked at the shining barrel of the revolver. Then he put it back, shutting the case with a click. Wissotzky, watching him from the crack of a door which led to the room adjoining, drew a breath of relief.

It was not clear to the Judge himself why he closed the case and put it back in the bag. But he still held a sense of the wonderful smile and the dark, gleaming eyes of the woman below, and his hand was stayed by a great unconscious desire to let himself be drawn by her eyes once more, to let them bring him one more blessed moment of forgetfulness.

VI

THE arrangements at the camp were of the most primitive order. There were six long tables in the dining room. The present guests ate together at one of them. The walls were sealed with pine wood. Hallam had festooned them that morning with fresh balsam boughs. There was a log fire burning in the great fireplace at the end of the room.

The Judge had so far been oblivious of his surroundings, with the exception

of the discomfiting sensation of cold and the annoyance of the black flies. But today at dinner the cheerful crackling of the fire, and the resinous odor of the burning pine, mingled with that of the fresh balsam boughs on the walls, struck him agreeably. He ate the trout caught that morning, fried hot and crisp and brown, and found it delicious.

Opposite him sat the new guest, who was inscribed on the register as Mrs. Isabel Maynard. The Judge glanced at her covertly from time to time. She was a pronounced brunette, with hair of that intense blackness which holds a bluish shadow. It was worn parted and coiled at the nape of the neck. Her curving, beautifully penciled eyebrows almost met the line of her hair, and beneath were set eyes like living jewels, dark and changing, according to the light. The iris was hazel against a velvety dilating pupil, and the lashes were long and black and thick. In repose her eyes seemed somber and watchful, and there was an element of fascinating mystery to her, but when she smiled, as she seemed ever ready to do, in response to an occasional remark of the Judge—this impression vanished immediately, leaving one of a perfect childlike ingenuousness and an infinite sweetness.

She wore a very simple black gown, relieved by a lace collar and cuffs, estimated by Mrs. Durant as real and costly.

The Judge admired her hands as they reached for the bread or lifted a glass to her lips. They were fine and sensitive, with tapering fingers. He remembered that his mother always considered a woman's hands an infallible index. And these were essentially feminine. Indeed, everything pertaining to this woman struck the same note, that of a subtle femininity, the note of sex which belongs to some women exclusively. No man within her range could be long unconscious of it. The Judge had felt its power at once.

"Thank you for giving us such a delicious entrée, Judge!" said Mrs. Durant.

"I feel highly honored that you are enjoying it," answered the Judge. He preferred not to talk at all. He noticed,

however, with senses peculiarly alert to anything concerning the new guest, that Mrs. Durant had not drawn her into the conversation with the tactful courtesy due a stranger, which she might well have used.

"You can scarcely call them delicious, when you almost accused me of cruelty in catching them," he said to Mrs. Maynard.

She laughed, a low, spontaneous, girlish laugh. Mrs. Durant slowly put up her lorgnette and surveyed her as though just conscious of her existence. An uninteresting and unattractive school teacher on her vacation would have been at once the recipient of Mrs. Durant's gracious patronage, but until this supremely beautiful woman, who had suddenly dropped into their midst, could offer some social guarantee, she considered it prudent to ignore her.

"How was the weather in town last night, before you left?" Wissotzky inquired of the stranger.

"It was sultry," she answered, "and very uncomfortable on the train. I did not sleep at all."

"That was really too bad," said the Judge, in a voice of distracted concern. Mrs. Durant's light blue eyes shot him an exasperated glance. Surely a man of the Judge's age and position should be proof against the attractions of casual women, she thought. Her own daughter Elsie sat staring at the newcomer with her mouth open. Her face was lifeless and stupid in repose, her claims to beauty existing only in her regular features, coloring and hair.

Arthur Hallway, who had strange fits of silence at home, interspersed with periods of garrulity, had so far been very loquacious in the woods. But today he was struck speechless by the beauty of the new guest. He was a delicately featured blond boy, with a forehead which showed imaginative qualities, and a rather weak mouth. He had received a shock in his childhood, which had enfeebled his intellect and impaired his constitution.

"It commenced to grow colder after we left Remsen," said Mrs. Maynard. "I was obliged to ring for a blanket.

This was my first experience at traveling at night," she added. "I found it a strange sensation, rushing through the night, gradually leaving the towns with their lights, rushing, always rushing into a vague darkness—as if I were being transported forever from everything I had known, leaving our little world, for another, greater sphere, where I was to learn many things. I had a strange sense of being impelled through infinite space, where I looked back upon the earth like the soul after death."

She spoke dreamily, with a voice whose tones vibrated on the air after she had ceased to speak. They lacked the cultured intonation of Mrs. Durant's and Priscilla's, but their tones were thin, while hers were rich with a quality that seemed to caress the listener.

The Judge leaned forward, fascinated. He wished she would go on talking indefinitely. There was something in the voice which stirred his blood, awakening a long dormant pulse of youth.

"She is temperamental," thought Wissotzky. He had found Americans were decidedly lacking in this quality. Then he saw her hand move suddenly to the bosom of her dress, noticing it casually as one of those unconscious movements to which we are all given. It was only later that his mind returned to it significantly.

Mrs. Durant yawned elaborately behind a thin, well kept hand, and proceeded to fold her napkin, preparatory to rising.

The newcomer was the last to go out, and the Judge followed her. When she sank languidly into the chair she had vacated before lunch, he drew up one beside her. Mrs. Durant, pursuing her embroidery at the far end of the veranda, where she had been sitting before, exchanged a significant glance with her daughter.

"Do you object to smoking?" inquired the Judge.

She shook her head, smiling; then she was struck with his pallor. "Do not try to entertain me," she said, as he seemed to be seeking for a remark. "Above all things you need rest and quiet."

This understanding of his case was not strange, for it was plain that the Judge was very ill—his breakdown had been commented upon in the newspapers. But her voice vibrated with a deeper note than that of superficial sympathy. Her entire expression, the quiver of her sensitive nostrils, the sudden lifting of her face to his, implied an intuitive understanding which stirred the Judge with a passionate gratitude. His eyes asked fiercely whether she felt that she spelt the word rest, rest from himself and the torture of his thoughts. As he bent involuntarily nearer, her eyes drew him again, answering his with a look which rendered him for the moment incapable of thought or speech, at once passionate, mysterious and tender. They closed suddenly as though they were tired, and the Judge returned to himself, and to an irritated consciousness of the presence of the world.

Wissotzky sat a little distance from them. He was scribbling letters with a fountain pen. At the same time, his senses were alert to things about him. He knew that though Arthur was talking apparently to Elsie, his interest was concentrated upon the other end of the balcony, where the new arrival was sitting with the Judge. Also that after the first few words there had been no conversation between those two. And a silence between a man and a woman of such beauty and magnetism meant but one thing, that a sudden understanding had sprung up between them which made words unnecessary. Who was she, and why had she come? She was not a patient, for Dr. Comyns had not mentioned her in a letter he had received that morning. But still he had noticed a certain expression at the table, which indicated a tendency. It was possible that he might still hear from Comyns regarding her. At all events, her arrival was opportune as far as the Judge was concerned, for she had gripped him with a sudden interest at a critical period of his malady, diverting him from himself. If she could only continue to do so. Wissotzky ceased scribbling, and, leaning back in his chair, mentally rehearsed the history of the

Judge's case, which he had received from Comyns, giving himself up to speculations concerning his chances in the event of certain unforeseen conditions.

In the woods he wore a sweater and an old gray suit which had grown too small for him, and smoked cigarettes constantly.

Mrs. Maynard remained with her eyes closed. The Judge forbore to speak, lest she might be asleep. He studied her with an absorbed interest, drinking in every detail of a personality which had seized him by force, taking him bodily out of himself, at a time when he could not reason, only succumb absolutely.

She looked very young to the Judge, not more than twenty-six or seven at the utmost, and strangely, pathetically tired with the fatigue which is of mind and soul as well as body.

Her lustrous black lashes threw bluish shadows on her cheeks; her hands were folded in her lap. And the expression of her face in repose, the droop of the head, every line of her figure unconsciously combined to give the look of one who is beaten. And the suggestion was more noticeably conveyed by her singularly expressive hands than any other part of her body. Their indescribable pose upon her lap signified, to the Judge, utter helplessness, utter hopelessness against some great and crushing force.

His own sense of defeat made him acute to the impression this woman conveyed, and he felt that life had driven her beaten into the woods as he himself had been driven.

Her apparent fatigue of mind and body detracted nothing from her beauty. Its unique quality of line and color did not depend upon whether she looked well or ill. The perfect contour of her head was outlined against the chair, and the cameolike distinctness of her features, the contrast of the blue-black hair curving from her brow against the pale ivory of the skin was more pronounced here in the open air than within. The Judge could have fallen upon his knees before her in a sudden impulse of worship, but the hand of convention was upon him and he chafed under it.

Mrs. Maynard raised her eyes and met his gravely regarding her. This woman did not need to speak; her silences were fraught with meaning; they said to the Judge: "Here am I, blessed oblivion from self-torment and the deadly weariness of days that have grown stale; a fresh draught, after the taste of things that are bitter; a green, shady oasis after the blinding glare; rest and relief from all effort, from eternal struggle and doubt." And she knew by the Judge's face he had received her message.

VII

THE chatter at the other end of the veranda had ceased, Elsie having dragged Hallway unwillingly down to the lake with her, to hold the oars while she fished. Mrs. Durant still sat placidly embroidering, keenly conscious of the two at the other end of the balcony.

The entrance door suddenly framed the uncouth figure of Billings. He came to look for the Judge. He saw him leaning back in his chair, a contented expression having replaced the tormented look of the morning. His pipe, smoked out, was hanging loosely from one hand, which hung on the arm of the chair in a position of relaxation.

The Judge's comfortable position, the proximity of the lady, made it doubtful to Billings whether it was really necessary to follow Wissotzky's instructions to "keep the Judge busy." He finally coughed with a painful effort, walked down in front of the camp where the Judge could see him, and picked up a few twigs which he added to the pile of branches heaped upon a stone mound, intended for the campfire that was lit every evening. Then he raised his eyes and saw Wissotzky regarding him significantly. In answer to an imperceptible shake of the doctor's head, he walked away quickly. His presence had awakened no inspiration as far as the Judge was concerned, if he had observed him at all.

For an hour the silence was unbroken. The Judge lay back in his chair in the complete and utter relaxation that precludes all effort.

On the lake two boats stood motionless: that which held Elsie and Arthur, another with Billings—trying to earn his four dollars a day by catching trout for the Judge's breakfast. Wissotzky still remained at his post. He was the soldier on guard. He had finished his letters, and was buried in a forest of old newspapers which he had taken from a table in the hall. They dated back seven or eight weeks, but he found them instructive, for in New York his duties as Doctor Comyns's assistant left him no time for any but a cursory glance at the day's news. And he had found a detailed history of the Brettner case which interested him extremely, as it was so intimately identified with the man who was in his care.

The woman by the Judge's side, who had been lulled into a semi-conscious condition, suddenly became acutely alive to the silence. In her experience she had never known such a silence in which the world stood still and she seemed to hear her own heartbeats. She had never been in a spot so completely isolated. Always accustomed to the hum and buzz of the world, the profound stillness seemed to hold something unknown and mysterious, of which she was vaguely afraid. Her feeling the night before upon the train, of being rushed through space to another sphere, seemed to be realized. And still, though she had left the world behind, she carried reminders which lay upon her with the deadly weight of a nightmare which will not be shaken off. This was responsible for the look which Wissotzky's trained eye had detected at the table, and which indicated what he regarded as a tendency.

Suddenly the Judge's pipe dropped from his hand to the floor.

The woman in the chair beside him started. With one hand grasping his chair, and his head slightly inclined to one side, the Judge slept, his first natural sleep in weeks.

Mrs. Maynard rose and stood looking at him intently. Wissotzky joined her. He felt the Judge's pulse, then smiled. They drew a rug carefully over the sleeper, then left him.

Mrs. Maynard paced slowly to the other end of the balcony, which looked into the uncleared woods, and stood gazing fixedly into their green, mysterious depths, as though uncertain of what they might contain. She knew now it was their silence which she had felt when she lay back in that physical prostration which had left her mind strangely alive. Wissotzky followed her slowly, observant of the symmetry of her figure and the free grace of its movements.

Receiving only an impression of perfect and harmonious proportions, one never paused to consider whether she were stout or thin. Her black gown fell in a straight, unbroken line from her shoulders, and it was of that lusterless soft material which is like the skin of a snake, and of that shade of black which resembled her hair exactly and which is called night blue.

"He will probably sleep for hours."

Mrs. Maynard started. She had not heard Wissotzky close behind, and her hand moved simultaneously with a creeping furtive movement to her breast, as though to make sure that something she wore beneath was still there.

It was then that Wissotzky remembered the similar movement she had made at the table.

"Is he very ill?" she asked.

"He is tired," said Wissotzky noncommittally. "I suppose you know that he is Judge Revercombe? The papers have had much to say of him recently."

"How should I know? I have only just arrived," she said distinctly.

Her eyes met Wissotzky's clearly and unwaveringly, but in some unaccountable way he felt she was not telling him the truth.

"Ah, yes, I had forgotten," he said absently, and he asked himself what reason she could have for denying that she knew it was Judge Revercombe by whose side she had been sitting for the last hour.

"I heard you address him as Judge," she said indifferently. "But there are so many judges."

"This one has been in the limelight. Very soon after his arrival here it was

published in all the papers." Wissotzky looked at the end of his cigarette.

"I am not given to reading those items. I generally scan the papers, that is all," said Mrs. Maynard indifferently. And again for some unaccountable reason, Wissotzky felt a doubt regarding this statement.

"Who would think they would find the Judge in this out-of-the-way corner of the world? The other day a young reporter arrived here more dead than alive. He had tramped all the way from the station. But he did not get near the Judge. The press of this country is a never-failing source of wonder to me. How do they get the news? They know everything."

"Everything?" said Mrs. Maynard, with a slight curl of the lip.

"With few exceptions," laughed Wissotzky. "For instance, they are still speculating wildly over the missing jewel in the Warren collection. Its value increases with every edition."

Mrs. Maynard's eyes interrogated.

"The emerald of great price which was not found upon the thief, Richard Brettner, when they caught him," explained Wissotzky. "It is said to be worth almost as much as the entire collection of jewels. Perhaps you are not familiar with the Brettner case?"

"I have read something of it," said Mrs. Maynard.

"Well, if you are interested, you will find the entire history in those old newspapers. I have just been reading them, and though it is old news, I find it preferable to read such a case when the first excitement has evaporated, and one can review the facts with a calm, unbiased mind. I see a point now which at the time of the crime quite escaped me."

"And what is that?" said Mrs. Maynard curiously.

"Do sit down," said Wissotzky, drawing a chair forward. He rather enjoyed his conversation with this interestingly beautiful woman.

"Now we know, statistically, that a great percentage of the crimes perpetrated are either for women or stimulated by women indirectly. The papers have hinted at a woman in the Brettner

case, but so far she has been an absolutely mythical personage. She has the emerald, without the shadow of a doubt."

Mrs. Maynard looked at him admiringly.

"I am surprised they have never thought of that. How simple and yet ingenious!" There was a trace of irony in her tone that quite escaped Wissotzky. He flicked the ashes from his cigarette, looking modestly pleased.

"Why don't you send this suggestion to headquarters?" she said.

"Oh, I am only working it out for my own pleasure," answered Wissotzky, "as I would a problem in chess. Besides, there may be a reason for not substantiating, at present, their vague hints of a woman back of Brettner's repeated crimes. Have you ever thought of that, by any chance?"

"I have not thought about it at all," she said wearily.

"It may be a case of pull. Someone is paying to keep her out of the papers," said Wissotzky decidedly.

Mrs. Maynard stifled a yawn. "It may be so. I must go up now and unpack, but I don't feel at all inclined for the exertion. Now we are on the subject, what do you think of Brettner's chances?"

"I do not think they can convict him of murder in the first degree. It may be for life, or an indeterminate sentence. There was no mark of violence on the Colonel; he simply fell from the excitement of the burglary, and you know that the law holds a man responsible for a death which happens during the perpetration of a felony. It was Brettner's bad luck that the Colonel happened to have valvular affection of the heart. No doubt it was all well planned, but the unexpected happened."

Mrs. Maynard began to twist her white, slender hands together in a nervous fashion, which was another indication to Wissotzky of a tendency he had previously suspected.

"How still it is here!" she said irrelevantly. "I feel as if I were in a church."

"You will experience the beneficial effects of this quiet, after a time," said

Wissotzky. "It is your greatest need at present."

"How do you know that?" she asked.

Wissotzky smiled. "It is plain to a physician's eyes," he answered. "Did your physician send you here?" He waited to hear her mention Doctor Cornyns, but she shook her head.

"I came of my own accord," she said. "It was a blind instinct, a longing to get away from the world—people."

"You are safe here. It is the best place for you," said Wissotzky comfortingly. "Where did you hear of this camp? How did you happen to come here?" he ventured.

"A friend told me of it."

"What was her name? If she was here last summer I would know her."

"She was not here," said Mrs. Maynard. "She knew from a friend of hers, and I do not know her name."

"Ah!" said Wissotzky. "I also stumbled upon it by chance. The very best things in life come to us that way. I will take another look at the Judge."

She waited until Wissotzky returned to her, surprising him by the anxiety of her expression.

"He is sleeping a natural, healthy sleep," he said. "Nature seems to be taking things in her own hands. I cannot tell you how glad I am."

"He will get well here," she said, clasping her hands suddenly and impulsively.

"I hope so," said Wissotzky gravely. Her unexpected turns were puzzling.

"You must resolve that you will also get well, and I advise you to put aside everything of the world you have left and give yourself up to nature." He signified the woods with a sweep of his arm. Then he noticed, as he spoke, that her hand crept again to her breast as though to make sure of that something she carried beneath her dress. "And if I were you," he added impulsively, "I would give any valuables that you have brought with you to Hallam, the proprietor. He is absolutely trustworthy, and you will be relieved of all anxiety as to their safety."

"I have no jewels or valuables, beyond a little money, except this." She

held up her finger, on which gleamed an enormous pearl. "And I always wear it. It was given me by a friend, whom I may never see again."

"I was sure you wore your jewels in a little bag around your neck as ladies often do when they travel, because I noticed you putting your hand there unconsciously from time to time, or I thought it might be a valuable necklace."

"You are mistaken," she said clearly. "I am wearing nothing under my gown. What you noticed is a nervous habit." And this time Wissotzky was positive that she was telling him an untruth.

After Mrs. Maynard had gone to unpack, Wissotzky sat for some time motionless in the chair where she had left him. His half-smoked cigarette had gone out in his hand; his eyes wore a somnambulistic expression, as his mind wandered at will through a maze of wild speculations concerning the woman with whom he had just been conversing.

When he finally rose, rubbing his eyes, it was with a sense of impatience at himself for allowing his mind to give credence to the preposterous supposition which had flashed across it so suddenly. He felt that he had been sleeping and dreaming all manner of absurd and incredible things, for it did not seem possible to him that he had been thinking with his usual sane habit of thought.

Then his eyes fell upon the old newspapers that still lay upon the floor of the veranda around the chair where he had been sitting near the Judge after lunch. He blamed them instantly for the wild flight of his imagination. His mind, full of the Brettner case, had jumped immediately at a conclusion. He had been thinking of the mythical creature who was supposed to have prompted Brettner's crimes, and this woman seemed strangely and suddenly to embody his thoughts. And yet there might be no such woman in existence. She might have been only created to satisfy the demand of the reading public for sensational details.

Then he remembered that he had talked a great deal upon the Brettner

case, but that she seemed to have nothing to say, though he could see she was a woman of mentality as well as temperament of a strange impressionistic order. But this neutrality might be accounted for on the ground that she had not read the case thoroughly. It was quite possible that if, as he still suspected, she wore a valuable necklace under her gown, she did not wish to acquaint a stranger with the fact.

Though, being a Russian, he could not detect that vague inflection of the voice which was not American, he instantly decided she was a foreign product, a rare-blooded type of one of the Latin countries grafted upon American soil. Barring her nobility of carriage and that sudden nervous turn of the head, with a slightly dilating nostril which reminded him of the full-blooded Arabians which he had seen driven by the officers of the Czar, behind the royal carriage in Russia, there were a hundred little signs which spoke to him of race.

And he had mentally, for one second, accused this woman of being the accomplice of a thief. He inwardly laughed, reflecting that we are sometimes not responsible for the wild ideas that flash across the mind.

He wondered again who she was, and whether her husband was alive or dead, or neither, but one of those mythical American husbands whom no one ever sees, and whose sole use seems to be that of providing a name and a status. And he thought it rather strange she could not remember the name of the woman by whose recommendation she was there.

He stretched himself lazily, feeling stiff from sitting and inclined to limber himself by a walk upon one of the many trails that traversed the woods in maple-like lines and intersections. But the Judge was still sleeping and he would not leave his post. He took up one of the old newspapers, and sinking into a chair, continued his perusal of the Brettner case.

VIII

THE Judge sat up, rubbing his eyes. As he did so, Mrs. Maynard came slowly out upon the veranda.

She saw Wissotzky with his head buried in an old newspaper, while there were others on his knee and littering the floor about his chair.

"Still reading about Brettner?" she said lightly over his shoulder.

Looking a little self-conscious, he swept the papers off his knee, for he saw the Judge had awakened, and rose stiffly to his feet.

Mrs. Maynard had changed her costume for a creamy clinging muslin, exquisitely embroidered, and she wore a large flat white hat, trimmed with a wreath of white crushed roses that sat low on her head, touching her shoulders in the back so that it had the effect of a nimbus. The entire effect was simplicity itself, but of the costliest order, for the gown was of the finest and sheerest, and the embroidery alone must have cost a fabulous sum, and her hat bore an exclusive stamp. She looked very girlish, very exquisite and rare.

Not quite awakened after his long sleep to a due sense of reality, the Judge observed her wonderingly. "How long have I been asleep, Wissotzky?" he asked.

Wissotzky pulled out his watch. "Three hours," he answered, smiling.

"Is it possible?" cried the Judge, while the others laughed at his consternation.

"Now I think you should have some tea," Mrs. Maynard said with a pretty air of authority.

"Tea!" said the Judge delightedly. "That sounds good, eh, Wissotzky?"

"Am I not a Russian?" said Wissotzky scornfully.

"How is she going to get tea served?" said the Judge, after Mrs. Maynard had gone quickly within.

"If she wants tea, she will get it," said Wissotzky unconcernedly, as he lit a fresh cigarette. "Women understand these things."

In a moment Eph, the Judge's servant, appeared, staggering under the weight of a large tray, followed by Mrs. Maynard.

Wissotzky sprang forward, and drew a rustic table into service. To his surprise the tray held, besides a plate of toast temptingly brown and a pot of the home

made preserve which was the specialty of the camp, a beautiful silver samovar.

"I always carry my samovar," said Mrs. Maynard, as she proceeded deftly to make the tea.

"In America, there is no time for tea and all that accompanies it," said Wissotzky. "As a student in Russia, there was always a salon where I knew I would find a group around the samovar, discussing, when the servant was in hearing, literature and the last medical discovery, otherwise the things that were closer to our hearts."

"The ultimate freedom of Russia," said the Judge, smiling.

"That is my atmosphere," said Mrs. Maynard eagerly. "The fight under pressure of the greatest danger for the freedom without which there is no life."

"May Providence preserve you from ever putting foot on Russian soil then!" said the Judge devoutly.

"I should immediately involve myself in a plot to assassinate a grand duke," said Mrs. Maynard.

Wissotzky, looking at her over the glass of tea he was sipping, met an expression which plunged him again into speculation. The womanly sweetness in the eyes was superseded by an expression of utter lawlessness, with which her entire personality seemed to change.

Mrs. Maynard lifted a cigarette case that lay near the samovar and handed it to the two men. Then she took a cigarette herself and Wissotzky lit it for her.

"You smoke like a Russian," he said, smiling, but he thought the comparison unjust a moment later. In reality, she handled the cigarette with that consummate grace which of all the world belongs exclusively to the Spanish woman. And the Judge, watching her with fascinated eyes, wondered how he had ever considered it unrefined for a woman to smoke.

Mrs. Maynard thought fit to enlighten Wissotzky. "I am of Spanish origin," she said. "I did not learn to smoke until after I married, when I went to live in Cuba with my husband. He owned big coffee plantations there." She leaned back, watching the tiny rings of smoke as they curled upward from her lips.

"My husband was killed suddenly in a riot. I could not continue to live in Cuba then, so sold my interest there."

"How long is it since this misfortune occurred?" said the Judge, with deep concern.

"Seven years. I have traveled ever since trying to forget myself, and constantly moving, I have drifted away from my friends. I find myself suddenly —alone."

"Have you no relatives?" asked the Judge.

"No, I was an only child; my parents are dead. I have relatives in Spain, utter strangers, for my grandfather on my mother's side was a grandee of the Spanish court, but my mother made a *mésalliance*, and she was disinherited. Some day I may go to Spain and look up my relatives."

She spoke without any emotion, or rather, as if emotion had been killed in her.

Wissotzky leaned back with a long-drawn breath. One fact she had given was self-evident, that of noble Spanish origin. But he kept wondering at the details which she had not told. And he could not explain the feeling that her story, far from solving her personality to him, only made it the more inexplicably mysterious.

Mrs. Durant came out on the veranda just at that moment. She was shocked at seeing Mrs. Maynard smoking. But she assured herself instantly that, owing to her first impressions of the lady, the action was not surprising. Her ease of manner, so far as the men were concerned, was ground enough for suspicion.

When Arthur and Elsie came up from the lake a few moments later, their faces were a study.

"Mamma," said Elsie, "did you see Mrs. Maynard smoking?"

"Elsie, don't look in that direction," said Mrs. Durant. "Besides, it is time you made yourself presentable."

The Judge's changed manner was strongly indicative to Wissotzky of a rally in his malady, and he had not a single doubt but that it was due to the woman who was talking with them. He imagined that the Judge was peculiarly

receptive to some wonderfully strong potent contained in her personality. As far as he himself was concerned, he admitted it would be easy for him also to fall under the spell of her fascination, were it not that her appeal to him was that of a purely mental stimulus. For he found that the wild idea which had entered his mind when they discussed the Brettner case would not be killed by ridicule, therefore she took the form of a continual source of peculiar speculations which her personality verified at one moment and the next denied.

"How would you like to go out on the lake for a little while?" inquired the Judge with a sudden inspiration. "I feel like pulling a little."

Mrs. Maynard looked at Wissotzky for his approval.

"I do not think it would harm," he replied in answer to her look—"if you do not overexert yourself, Judge."

Wissotzky brought a wrap and held it for her. As he did so, his eyes fastened themselves on her neck. Before, under the transparency of her dress, he had seen no sign of a necklace. Now he thought he could discern a line, like that of an invisible chain, on which women wear their valuable pendants. But though he was reasonably certain of what he saw, he assured himself afterward that he would not have sworn to it in a court of justice. And suppose she did wear a valuable jewel under her gown which she refused to surrender into Hallam's keeping, he thought, what then?

Perhaps she clung to it on superstition or sentimental grounds. It might be a token from the husband who was killed in Cuba. He remembered that she had not told what happened to the man who killed him, or whether the shooting had been intentional or accidental. Neither had she specified the cause of the riot. But he felt sure that her other listener had not noticed these omissions.

IX

As the Judge and Mrs. Maynard walked slowly down to the lake, Wissotzky seized the occasion to limber him-

self with a brisk walk. He took the trail through which, at intervals, he could see the lake.

The Judge was pulling slowly, while Mrs. Maynard leaned back in the boat, trailing her long white fingers in the water; and her face was lifted, so that her beautiful profile caught the last dying rays of the sun.

Here in the isolation of the lake the Judge felt free from the sense of the world which had irritated him at the camp. From the very first, he had felt absolved from any attempt to entertain this woman. She seemed quite above and beyond the petty and conventional actions of ordinary society, and it was eminently restful to his tired nerves and brain to glide slowly along without being obliged to talk.

Leaning back, with her hands clasping her cloak over her breast, her face lifted to the sky, she appeared like a person who is under a spell.

Gradually it seemed to them as if a thin, transparent veil dropped slowly from the sky, softening everything into a faint obscurity. And simultaneously a thin white mist rose slowly from the lake, giving the world an unearthly, unreal appearance.

The Judge looked at Mrs. Maynard's face in the mist and wondered with a vague fear whether it was only another one of the dream faces he had seen lately. He was still in the condition where at times he could not differentiate between his thought and reality. The fact that he had been drugged twelve hours out of the twenty-four was partly instrumental in this.

Then suddenly he remembered the dream he had described to Comyns, where, in the whirlpool of sinking, screaming humanity, one woman's face had been hidden from him, sinking with a hand thrown out for help. And it seemed that the face of the woman opposite was the face that had been hidden from him.

After dinner they were all lounging on the veranda. Arthur Hallway was talking to the new guest, sitting on the steps at her feet, and she was listening as though her mind were somewhere else,

half bored and half amused at the open admiration on his boyish face. He was telling her how much he enjoyed being away from home, because his mother made such a baby of him, and how fortunate he esteemed himself in obtaining the friendship of Wissotzky, who seemed to take an immediate liking to him, so much so, in fact, that he had suggested they share a tent together, and he had found him most interesting company.

"These Russians are all clever," he said with an experienced air.

"Yes, he is clever," said Mrs. Maynard, thinking of the conversation that afternoon upon the Brettner case, when he had showed her the point which the police seemed to have overlooked.

"You'd never think so to look at him, would you, though? He's so modest and quiet, but if you think he isn't on to everything that's worth knowing, he'll fool you."

Mrs. Maynard looked at him with a faint interest.

"Why, sometimes, he tells me what I'm thinking about," said Arthur.

The interest upon her face deepened, and she was leaning forward with a sudden question, when she became aware that the person they were discussing was standing near them, and she drew back startled.

"You are wanted for the fourth hand at bridge, Hallway," said Wissotzky, and there was a faint ring of authority in his tone. He resented Hallway's admiration for the stranger, for he knew the weakness of his nature. He had used his efforts unsparingly for him so far with success, and hoped to surprise Comyns with unlooked-for results.

"Let the Judge take it," said Arthur sullenly, resenting the interruption.

"The Judge is in no condition to play bridge. It would tire him extremely," said Wissotzky smoothly. "You don't seem to be in the mood, Hallway. I must confess to the same—but we cannot disappoint the ladies."

Arthur rose slowly to his feet, not proof against this appeal to his chivalry, and Mrs. Maynard laughed softly, gazing admiringly at Wissotzky for his cleverness in gaining his point.

"Will you pardon me for taking Hallway off so unceremoniously?" said Wissotzky. "I have a premonition that you will not be long alone." He looked significantly at her, as the Judge joined them, drawing up a chair near Mrs. Maynard.

X

THE rain fell softly all night. In the morning the sun broke from the clouds, bringing a pleasant warmth, which drew out the fragrance of the fresh green feathery tops, visible upon all the evergreens.

The Judge stepped out on the veranda sniffing the air. His eyes were bright, his color decidedly better; his entire manner was significant of expectancy.

"Good morning," said Mrs. Maynard in the doorway.

"Oh, good morning," said the Judge, grasping her hand fervently. "How did you sleep?"

"I suppose I could say I slept well," said Mrs. Maynard, "but it was a strange sleep."

"In what way?" said Wissotzky. "Did you dream?"

"No, I did not dream," she answered slowly, clasping her hands over her breast and looking beyond their inquiring faces at the lake. "But every once in a while I woke and lay listening to the rain, falling softly, oh, so softly, until I fell asleep again. It hushed me like a lullaby, and I seemed to see it falling, falling in these woods, refreshing all the green things, and I felt, if I could go out into them barefooted and feel the rain upon my face, it would give me a new, sweet life."

"Oh," said Elsie Durant, who was listening, "I love to go barefooted in the rain. Let us go together the next time it rains."

Mrs. Maynard smiled at her young, eager face, set in the frame of golden hair.

"Yes," she said eagerly, "we will go together." She put up her hand with a fond gesture and put back a stray, gleaming lock of the girl's hair.

"Come, Elsie!" said Mrs. Durant.

Putting her arm through her daughter's, she drew her in to breakfast. Her manner and action were final. They seemed to discourage any intimacy between Elsie and the new guest.

Wissotzky, watching, thought he saw an imperceptible change pass over Mrs. Maynard's face. She smiled slightly, and her eyes grew strangely hard and brilliant. Interested in every different passing phase of this woman, it seemed to him as if Mrs. Durant had aroused an entirely different side of her personality, a side which might belong, he thought, to the role his imagination had assigned her.

"Judge Revercombe certainly seems to be falling dead in love with Mrs. Maynard," said Elsie when they came out from the breakfast room, and saw the couple in question starting off for a day in the woods.

"Dead in love?" repeated Wissotzky quizzically. "I would not go as far as that."

"What then?" inquired Elsie promptly. "Do you think it is only a flirtation?"

"Elsie!" said her mother reprovingly.

"I could not say," said Wissotzky carefully, "not being sufficiently posted on the exact meaning of the word as it is understood in America."

"Flirtation means playing at love," explained Elsie.

"Then it is not a flirtation," said Wissotzky decidedly. "The Judge is as much in earnest as a man can be, for the time being."

Elsie looked puzzled, and Wissotzky hastened to explain himself, ignorant of the fact that Mrs. Durant was beginning to be alarmed.

"You know—there are certain women who make a peculiar appeal to men. They are excitants, intoxicants. Such women should be isolated; they should not be allowed to roam about."

"Elsie, will you go upstairs and fetch me some more wool, please?" said her mother.

Elsie, whose eyes were shining with a fascinated curiosity, rose with an impatient sigh, making no secret of her unwillingness.

"I must ask you not to speak so openly before my daughter," said Mrs. Durant, after she had gone. "I have tried to keep her innocent, and I find my task continually growing harder. Subjects which were never spoken about when I was a girl are now openly discussed."

"A very promising sign of the times," said Wissotzky. "Though I should not dream of questioning your policy as far as your daughter is concerned—has it ever occurred to you that in denying her right to know certain facts of life, you are stimulating a morbid curiosity?"

"This is a question which I have discussed with my pastor," said Mrs. Durant with dignity, "and while many parents take your side of the question, I have with his advice maintained the conservative policy."

"Had you discussed it with your physician," said Wissotzky, "he might have induced you to think differently. In Russia we encourage the young people to ask questions. In fact, they demand to know. Nothing is hidden from them. Life is difficult enough; why make the problem more intricate?"

"I have always tried to keep up with the times," said Mrs. Durant, resenting the implication that she was not progressive, "but this is a point of feeling. The unconsciousness of evil in Elsie is beautiful to me—I wish to keep her that way as long as I can. This woman seems to have an attraction for her. I do not like Mrs. Maynard and I don't wish Elsie to be friendly with her. I must say I am surprised at the Judge. I should think that, out of respect to me, he should have restrained his attentions."

Elsie's reappearance stopped further discussion between them.

"My father considers the Judge responsible for Colonel Warren's death," broke out Arthur.

"Your father is in no position to criticise the Judge," said Wissotzky sharply. "It has become a question whether a man who is a complex mixture should be identified with one bad act of his life, shut up where he cannot do his duty to his family, prevented from following his

chosen work which might be of benefit to society, simply because one of the innumerable acts of which he is capable happened to be bad."

"Society must be protected," said Arthur obstinately, while Mrs. Durant raised her eyebrows in mute protest at Wissotzky's outspoken argument for the criminal.

"Society cannot be destroyed. Millions of bad acts can be committed without affecting society. But why cut off a man's good acts, shut him up in a horrible cell and destroy his personality absolutely? Why not let him expiate his crime by his future actions in society, in life?"

"The day will come when no one will be shut up in prison," he concluded. Then he thought of Brettner lying in the Tombs awaiting his sentence, knowing that when he saw the world again he would be a prematurely aged man, his brain dazed, his initiative gone.

He lit a cigarette and strolled moodily into the woods, reflecting upon the horrible simplicity of society which denies the complexity of the individual, confusing an act with the soul. And then he thought about the woman at whom the newspapers mysteriously hinted as the overwhelming motive which had led Brettner to sin again, and his mind involuntarily associated her with Mrs. Maynard. He saw her wonderful eyes tempting Brettner's manhood, though her lips were silent, inspiring him to shower upon her the rarest and costliest of this world's goods. A man could give such a woman nothing less. She was a living incentive to crime. And still dwelling upon the hypothesis that Mrs. Maynard was the woman in the Brettner case, though he had no proof beyond his own instantaneous thought, he began to wonder what had brought her to the woods. He could not believe her presence there was incidental. He naturally concluded she came to seek the Judge, though it was a wild idea to suppose that anything could still be gained from him for the man who had betrayed his mercy. He questioned whether it was even in the Judge's power to exert

himself on behalf of Brettner should he feel so disposed.

It occurred to him that, having discovered she was watched, she had come there for safety. But why these very woods that were practically unknown to the general public, if it had not been some design connected with the Judge?

He thought, finally, it would be very amusing if the story he was writing around this woman should suddenly collapse because he had discovered his suspicions were unfounded. At the same time he wondered whether Mrs. Maynard, breathing the clear, rare balsam-scented air of the woods, surrounded by the Judge's observances, ever gave a moment's thought to Brettner. Then he remembered the look in her eyes the day before, which he had taken for a morbid sign, and this immediate answer to his question was like a sudden shadow thrown across his path.

Strolling down to the lake a little later, he was spied by Elsie out in her canoe. She shouted to him, and he waited while she paddled toward him with rapid, graceful movements, her arms bare to the shoulder, her hair glistening in the sun.

"Doctor Wissotzky," she said, as she finally neared the bank, catching a miniature balsam tree for a temporary anchor, "won't you please continue the explanation you were making when mamma sent me upstairs so that I could not hear?"

Wissotzky smiled at the frank ingenuousness of the question; then he drew himself up with dignity.

"I am surprised!" he began.

"At what?" inquired Elsie innocently.

"That you should consider me capable of supplying surreptitious information."

"Oh, what does it matter? I am dying of curiosity to know the reason of the peculiar attraction some women have for men. I know Mrs. Maynard is a woman like that—she attracts me, too. I think she is terribly fascinating."

"Why don't you ask your mother?" said Wissotzky stiffly.

Elsie laughed the fresh, young, unconscious laugh of youth.

"Mamma never answers such questions. Her invariable answer is: 'There is time enough for you to know these things.'"

Wissotzky looked at her doubtfully, considering the outcome of Mrs. Durant's policy. She had driven Elsie to him, to indulge her curiosity, and to do so satisfactorily would involve the entire lifting of the veil of sex. He had no intention of raising the very smallest corner, but another man in his place might have been less scrupulous. He wondered that Mrs. Durant did not see this avenue of danger opening before her young daughter.

The trees above Elsie threw their shadows over her face and throat. Wissotzky, studying her in the light of these recently acquired thoughts, received a perception of her virginal freshness, which seemed a part of the new day. And something else: the charm of that beautiful unconsciousness of which Mrs. Durant had spoken, and which she was trying to conserve at such risks. And it made him think of the light dew frosting the cobwebs, when he took his early morning saunters, disappearing with the first rays of the sun.

He bent down and held the canoe, which was in danger of tipping over.

"I discovered some of the large fungus you were so anxious for," he said quietly.

"Yes—where?" cried Elsie, instantly diverted.

"Let me tie up your canoe and we'll look for them together in the woods," said Wissotzky.

He helped her out gravely, holding her hand a fraction of a minute longer, perhaps, than Mrs. Durant might have approved, then they sauntered into the woods side by side, upon the narrow trail.

Wissotzky's mention of the fungus had been a pure invention, but he had been tempted to follow the Judge's example, and make the most of the beautiful day. It was pleasant to have a companion in the woods, and he also wished to forget himself for a time.

XI

At six o'clock that evening they were all sitting on the veranda, awaiting the

call to supper and momentarily expecting the return of the Judge and Mrs. Maynard.

"Listen?" said Elsie, lifting her finger.

The sound of singing came from the lake, accompanied by the strumming of the banjo, growing nearer and nearer, until the voices could be distinguished. The Judge was singing lustily.

Mrs. Durant's face hardened. He was falling rapidly in her regard. She had expected more dignity from a man of his position, not knowing that this was the first time in his life he had ever descended from his dignity or his seriousness. Wissotzky was amused at her expression, thinking that she would not be expected to realize that the Judge's present mood was due to a peculiar reaction. His voice rising above the others was a satisfactory sign for Wissotzky that his mental exhilaration had increased rather than abated. For he had feared that the new phase would disappear as quickly as it had arisen, leaving the old condition, and he hoped that this woman's ascendancy over the Judge would continue until he could again strike his normal balance, thereby serving as a tideover.

Wissotzky regarded this sudden attraction for Mrs. Maynard indulgently as the whim and the caprice of an invalid—which serves its purpose for the time being, without usurping any serious place in the patient's mind and life.

"We have had a glorious day," said the Judge, smiling benignantly as they came up from the boathouse. "Mrs. Durant, I have kept my promise. I have brought some trout."

It became customary for the two to make their plans together for the day. And they generally excluded the other guests of the camp. Long, drowsy hours were spent on the lake fishing when, during the space of an entire afternoon, barely a word was spoken.

The alternate programme of lake and woods during the long, beautiful days of June was sometimes interrupted by intervals when the rain fell in the steady downpour common to that region. Then the great log fire in the hall was tacitly left on the part of the other guests to the

Judge and Mrs. Maynard, Mrs. Durant appropriating to herself the more secluded one burning in a room off the hall.

It was on one of these days that Wissotzky arrived at a second instantaneous conclusion pertaining to Mrs. Maynard. She had been kneeling for some time before the logs, upon a balsam pillow, twisting her hands nervously.

"What do you see in the logs?" asked the Judge teasingly. He dreaded these days, for it transformed his nymph of the woods into a brooding, introspective creature who puzzled him vaguely.

"My entire life," she answered shortly. It did not occur to him to question the unvarying silence she maintained upon the details of her life in his anxiety to drive from her eyes a certain look which he attributed to the tragedy she had mentioned only once, upon that first day, in the casual manner with which some people hide their wounds from the world. And he commenced to talk of himself, a subject which always commanded her quick and sympathetic interest.

He began with his childhood, describing his life minutely until the time when his health began to give way.

She knelt before him, her restless hands clasped quietly on her breast, her eyes fixed on his face, with the look of a child who listens to a fairy tale.

Finally, pleased and flattered that his recital had diverted her so effectually, and encouraged by the sense of a certain silent sympathy, he spoke of the thing most sacred to him—his mother—and the loving companionship between her and himself. He told her of his sorrow when he felt as a boy he would never be able to fill the void left by his father's death.

"She lived just long enough to give me that foundation which can only be given at home," said the Judge. "From her I received an ideal of womanhood which I shall carry until death. It has stood firmly through all my experience with the darker side of life." His eyes dwelt eloquently upon Mrs. Maynard's face.

Suddenly he received a moment's

fleeting expression of something familiar; something in the lines of her figure, as she crouched by the fire, took on a vague likeness to a shadowy figure crouching among the other shadowy figures of a dim receding past.

"My experience in the criminal courts," said the Judge, passing his hand over his forehead with a slightly puzzled air, "has brought me evidences that, in the worst of women, there are surpassing instincts and impulses."

"That is a most interesting remark from your point of view," said Wissotzky, who, having just finished a game of chess, sauntered up to the fire.

"I could give you proofs of it," said the Judge, "if I could think of the instances that have come under my observation. One instance which happened early in my experience does occur to me. Strange, when I have been trying to think of recent years, something should pop up so clearly from a long way back. Can you explain this, Wissotzky, on psychological grounds?"

"Certainly," said the latter. "It must have been an association of ideas, something must have started the train—a word or even a look has led your mind back to the thing you spoke of."

"I—I cannot recollect anything," said the Judge, with a troubled expression. "There was something a moment ago, but it has gone from me."

"Think!" said Wissotzky eagerly. "I will help you." But Mrs. Maynard intervened quietly.

"I do not think it right for you to subject the Judge to such a strain," she said. "Why attempt to trace all our unaccountable thoughts?"

She looked clearly into Wissotzky's eyes, which gazed back at her, kindling with a sudden spark, and she knew that he felt there was a secret reason for her protest. Then he bowed in mute deference to her wishes.

"Nevertheless, I should find it interesting to trace yours," he said.

"No doubt," she answered, and there was a challenge in her eyes as she raised them.

Wissotzky wondered whether the challenge meant a consciousness of his

secret thoughts of her, and he felt quite positive that she alone could have suggested to the Judge this case in his early life on the bench. He felt an excitement similar to that which he had once experienced at a spiritualistic séance. Here the Judge was the medium. Through him some light might perhaps be thrown upon the mystery of this woman's personality, a mystery which was plainly not his affair, but which obsessed him, in the same degree that a student of mathematics is obsessed by a problem to which he cannot find the key.

XII

"It was the case of Maria Rappoldi," said the Judge, "but it proves my theory only indirectly, for Maria Rappoldi was not a bad woman, though she was tried for the murder of her husband."

He took his pipe from the stone mantel which overhung the fire, and commenced to fill it.

Wissotzky looked at Mrs. Maynard. She knelt perfectly still, as though her entire body were listening. To him her face wore an expression of unnatural calm, and he wondered if she could be Maria Rappoldi. Then he laughed inwardly at the reflection that there was no conclusion too wild, no theory too improbable for him to connect with this woman. Still, he argued, she must carry within herself the germ which generated his secret accusations.

"I can quote a dozen cases which would corroborate my statement finally, but I'll give you this now because it is an illustration that in a woman's nature the greatest and broadest humanity can be associated with the capacity for a great crime. It seems strange to me that I should have recalled it so clearly after all these years. The facts are briefly these: Maria Rappoldi stabbed her husband in a fit of rage. She suspected him of being unfaithful, followed him and surprised him with her rival. I don't remember all the details of the confession; only the salient points remain clear. And one of them was that the youth and the beauty of the woman

with whom her husband had sinned struck her between the eyes like a blow, depriving her of reason.

"She averred that she had also been beautiful once, but hard work had made her prematurely aged and ugly. The daughter of a thriving fruit vender, she had brought her husband a considerable dowry for her class. At twenty-five, she had borne him six children. Youth, beauty and fortune had gone to him, with this requital. In a blind fury she stabbed him to the heart with her stiletto. Then she fell upon her knees, naturally overcome with horror at the deed, and commenced to wail, 'My children! My little children!'

"The other woman put her hand over her mouth to still her cries, telling her she would be heard and sent to prison. Maria Rappoldi, looking stupidly at her, realized for the first time she was a mere child of fifteen or sixteen and as beautiful as an angel; and she was trembling and shaking with horror, and hiding her eyes from the sight of the man lying upon the floor with the blood welling from his wound. Imagine the scene, these two women brought together by their very horror. The girl implored Maria Rappoldi to save herself, and she answered that if Rappoldi was found in her room she might be accused of the murder. The girl had replied: 'Let them take me! I do not care if I live or die—and you have little children.' The girl, it appeared, had no relatives, and lived on the streets, from what she could get from men.

"Maria Rappoldi took this girl home and sheltered her among her own children until they were both apprehended for the murder. She reclaimed her from the streets, and what is more, she loved the girl. How these women clung together! The girl moaned when the officer tore them apart."

The Judge paused suddenly, struck by the immobility of Mrs. Maynard's pose as she knelt upon the floor, her eyes fixed steadily upon his face.

"These things affect you," he said with the involuntary tenderness which always crept into his voice when he addressed her. "We might talk of pleas-

anter things than the sordid records of the criminal court."

"Oh, I find these human records very interesting," she answered. "Please go on."

The Judge looked reminiscently into the fire. "Think of this woman, Maria Rappoldi," he said. "Her hot blood was the inheritance of her race, but look at the unparalleled generosity of her, to take this girl under those circumstances."

"Maria Rappoldi was a great woman," said Mrs. Maynard. The tenseness of her expression had relaxed. Her eyes shone.

"What was the name of the girl?" said Wissotzky eagerly.

"The name of the girl—the name of the — girl," mused the Judge, "was—Bella Cavallo."

"Bella Cavallo," repeated Wissotzky softly.

"Not a bad memory, eh, Wissotzky?" said the Judge. "And it's over ten years. I shouldn't have been able to give you one detail of this case a month ago. I recommended the girl to the Juvenile Court, which committed her to the reformatory. I have no clear recollection of her—only an indistinct impression of great beauty, though her face was blurred with tears. I was young then, not so hardened as I have since become. The girl affected me. I let her off with a few words. But when I told her she would be well taken care of and shown the way to a better life, I fear I did it without sincerity. I have no confidence in reformatories."

"What sentence did you pronounce upon Maria Rappoldi?" said Wissotzky negligently, lighting another cigarette in the embers upon the hearth. In reality his interest had ceased with the mention of the name of the girl whom Maria Rappoldi had befriended, for his conviction told him that she and the woman who called herself Mrs. Maynard were identical, and he felt assured that the Judge, in a subconscious manner, was also aware of the facts, for she had been the suggestion which had caused him to speak of the case. Wissotzky also felt positive that the Judge was

liable to recognize her any moment in one of those sudden flashlights thrown from the subconscious upon the conscious mind. And this possibility afforded him some excitement.

"The jury was sympathetic," said the Judge. "They returned a verdict of murder in the first degree with extreme provocation. She received twenty years' hard labor."

Mrs. Maynard shivered and turned from the fire to meet Wissotzky's grave and studious inspection. It seemed to her that her thoughts were never safe from this soft-footed, watchful Russian.

She sprang to her feet with an impatient movement. In this movement, and the involuntary expression of her eyes, which were those of an animal who is suddenly aware of the hunter, Wissotzky saw the girl, Bella Cavallo, the half-wild creature who moaned when they tore her from the arms of Maria Rappoldi.

XIII

WISSOTZKY had reported only a few bare facts to Doctor Comyns—namely, that the Judge had become infatuated with a very fascinating and beautiful woman, who stated she was the widow of a man who had been killed in Cuba.

He was shy of imparting to Comyns his secret conviction concerning the woman who had affected the Judge to such a degree. He had no positive basis for his convictions beyond that of an intangible suggestion. Yet, so far as he was concerned, there was only a bare chance of his being mistaken. He had infinite confidence in his own powers of perception.

In his letter to Comyns he had been silent upon the fact that Arthur Hallway had become a source of anxiety. He wished to save the boy from parental interference and he hoped to bring about a change. For his first instinct of danger had been correct. Mrs. Maynard had not been there two days before he saw that Arthur's life commenced to revolve around her actions. He watched stealthily for opportunities of a *tête-à-tête*, holding himself always in readiness to

take the Judge's place, when Mrs. Durant made her occasional demands upon him. He could not concentrate his mind upon study or upon trout. He had lost his normal interest in all the things which would have been for the benefit of his young, developing life.

They were sitting before the tent on the evening of the day following that on which the Judge had related the case of Maria Rappoldi. He had just finished a long dissertation in which he had tried to impress upon Arthur the necessity of study and concentration. But when he finally finished, Arthur gave no evidence of having heard, staring past him with the look of a somnambulist. Suddenly he rose, put on his coat silently and walked out of the tent up the trail to the camp.

The Judge was smoking his pipe in absorbed contemplation of Mrs. Maynard, who was sitting on the camp steps picking out a plantation song upon Eph's banjo. She was singing in a rich, low contralto as Arthur Hallway emerged from the woods. He was so struck by the picture she presented that he omitted any greeting to the little group upon the veranda.

"Good evening, Mr. Hallway," said Mrs. Durant with a sarcastic inflection.

"Oh, good evening," said Hallway, recalled to his remissness.

"Hello, Hallway," said the Judge urbanely, without removing his eyes from Mrs. Maynard.

Mrs. Durant sighed. She had long resigned herself to the Judge's infatuation, contenting herself with making her own demands upon him, which his never-failing courtesy could not refuse to satisfy. And the Judge, on his part, was indifferent to her opinion, sinking deeper and deeper into that lotus dream in which the world fades away.

"Good evening," said Wissotzky in his deep voice. No one had heard him come out of the woods.

Mrs. Durant responded graciously, thinking that at all events he had kept his head. He was intensely clever and Elsie seemed to like him immensely.

The crackle of flames could be heard from within.

"That sounds inviting," said Mrs. Durant, gathering up her work. "I am quite chilly."

Hallam came out on the veranda, looking about from one to the other with his shrewd, good-humored old eyes.

"Grub's waitin'," he announced.

Mrs. Durant shivered at the language, but she consoled herself with the thought that the supper was sure to make amends. She had lived in the most exclusive hotels with the most irreproachable service, whose viands could not compare with those which Hallam announced so characteristically.

Wissotzky paused as he mounted the steps to look at a bird which the children had caught. The rude little wooden cage hung from a hook.

"The bird is sick," said Wissotzky.

Mrs. Maynard suddenly stopped singing to look up at the cage.

"The last one died," said Hallam's little grandson, who was playing in front of the camp, "because it would not eat or drink."

"This one will die, too," said Wissotzky.

"It is a wild bird," said Mrs. Maynard. "It cannot live in prison. It is cruel to catch the wild birds. Let it go out into the woods."

"Naw," cried the boy. "It's an oriole, and orioles are rare. If it dies grandpa'll stuff it fer me."

"Little monster!" said Mrs. Maynard angrily.

She was the first, when supper was ended, to step out in the chill of the evening, followed closely by the Judge, holding her coat in his hand; and she went immediately to the birdcage. The oriole gazed at her dully without a gleam of interest or fear. He was sunk in misery and weakness, his heart breaking with its longing for the life beyond the cage. A strange expression crept into Mrs. Maynard's face. Bella Cavallo knew the meaning of a wild thing caught and caged. Something of its tragedy was reflected in her eyes for a moment. Then she opened the door of the cage, and stepped back.

For a moment the little prisoner looked at the door, too apathetic to realize its prison was open. Then sud-

denly it hopped down to the floor of the cage, and flew out slowly, for it was weak from want of food, to the nearest tree.

"The oriole! The oriole has flown away!" cried the children suddenly.

The little boy ran to the cage and found it open. Then he looked at Mrs. Maynard, and she laughed back at him in mischievous triumph. He burst into a sudden storm of tears.

"The oriole was mine!" he bawled. "Twasn't yours."

The others came out, surrounding the weeping child.

"She let my oriole go," he cried, stamping his foot in a fresh outburst of rage.

The Judge did his best to pacify him; but neither the promise of candy or money seemed to atone for the loss of the oriole, and his father carried him away, still bawling.

"Poor child!" said Mrs. Durant with a sigh.

"Do you think he is entitled to your pity?" said the Judge ironically.

"I believe in the rights of children," said Mrs. Durant composedly.

"According to that view, Mrs. Maynard is a transgressor. I confess she is a most appealing criminal."

"There is a strain of wildness in your own nature—to which the bird appealed," said Wissotzky insinuatingly in a low voice near Mrs. Maynard's ear—"a spirit which is impatient of restraint, which claims freedom for every living thing under the sun. I am in sympathy with that spirit."

She looked at him uncertainly, wondering if there was a drift of purpose in his words—and then at the Judge to see if he had heard. He met her glance, smiling.

"Yes, you are right," she said boldly.

"If you had the power—" prompted Wissotzky.

"I would open all the prison doors of the world," she said.

"The present system of criminal punishment is barbarous and primitive," said Wissotzky.

"It has not kept pace with the progress of the world in other respects,"

added the Judge mildly. "Man is just beginning to study himself scientifically. Laws have been made without any reference to the needs of human nature. Our present system crushes the life of the criminal. When we exclude him from the world, and take from him the power to do further harm to society, we have done our duty to society; then comes our duty to the criminal."

Wissotzky wondered whether the languid interest which people usually accord this subject would be enough to bring that sudden, alert expression into the face of Mrs. Maynard, were it not for the fact that she stood a criminal among them with stolen goods upon her. Perhaps she felt instinctively that he was watching her. He wondered whether it would be possible to gain her confidence so that she would deliver up to him the jewel which he was positive she had in her possession. Or he might startle her into an admission, by informing her suddenly of his belief, running one chance in a thousand of being mistaken.

XIV

MRS. MAYNARD went to her room, but she was restless and nervous. She had a growing consciousness that she was being constantly watched by Wissotzky, that not the least move, the slightest shade of her expression, escaped him. But she could not quite decide whether there was anything to be feared from this enigmatic personality. And the Judge's words that evening had also revived thoughts which the delightful days they had spent alone in the balsam-scented silence of the woods had driven quite into the background. She felt they would make sleep impossible.

She let down her hair, and seated herself at her toilet table; and suddenly encountered her own gaze in the blurred, imperfect mirror, her eyes widening and dilating. She rose impatiently, wishing to get away from the thoughts they suggested. She had become familiar lately with a new self, the conception which the Judge had created of her.

She went to the window and leaned

out, letting the cool air caress her face and bosom. Then she threw a coat over her negligée and stole down the stairway, her hair still unbound over her shoulders.

The bridge players were in a room to the left of the hall, and the door was closed, the night being cold.

She went out on the balcony and looked in at the window at the players. There were times when she almost felt she had never been anyone else than Mrs. Maynard, clothed with all the attributes of the Judge's imagination. But tonight she was Bella Cavallo, the wild bird which society had caught and caged. She was Number 25, with the name of being sullen and dangerous, nursing revolt in secret until the time when she could hit back at the hand which had branded her—Bella Cavallo, who felt that God had given her one only weapon, beauty, in her single-handed fight against a powerful enemy. Without it life would have hardly been possible.

This well ordered, conventional bridge party, playing so composedly before the cheerful fire, fanned the latent spark of an old flame. It was so typical of the forces against which she was a living protest, of the things to which she was alien.

She looked out beyond the glare of the campfire where the silence had spoken to her, awakening an instinct which groped blindly, tremulously, for something better and beyond the thing she had called life. She closed her eyes, trying to feel the solemn peace of the woods, to cool her hot thoughts in their calm, fragrant depths. Her hands twisted and untwisted above her breast, while in the depths of her conscious being was formulated a wordless prayer that she might never slip back to that mental darkness in which she had once been buried.

Arthur Hallway came suddenly out of the woods. He had become restless by the fire and had just returned from a saunter.

"What luck!" he said, his eyes shining into hers.

"The air of my room oppressed me,"

she said. "I wanted to get out into the woods. I just stopped for a moment to watch them play."

"I will go with you," he said, his hand seeking hers beneath her cloak, "to see that nothing harms you."

She looked at Wissotzky, cutting and shuffling the cards so calmly, with a feeling of defiance. His efforts to keep Arthur out of the range of her influence had so far not aroused the slightest resentment in her, but tonight her mood inclined her to take this chance of crossing the Russian. With all his cleverness, she thought he did not realize that if the moth is driven to the flame, nothing can save it.

"No, Arthur, you must not come with me," she said.

A gust of wind blew out the last flames of the campfire, and left them in complete darkness.

"Let me go with you," said Arthur intensely. He held her hand in a close, vigorous clasp, and suddenly she felt his young, firm cheek, cool with the night air of the woods, pressed to hers, and she did not push him away. Her brain was fevered with the hot, rebellious thoughts of her old self, and there was something in this contact that cooled it. For though she was not many years older than this boy, tonight she felt immeasurably old, and the new self which was struggling within her absorbed all that was young and fresh and pure. Perhaps for this reason she rose sometimes at dawn and went into the woods before anyone was stirring, and walked barefooted on the soft carpet of pine needles, listening with a keen sense of pleasure to the faint twitter of the young birds.

When Wissotzky returned to the tent to bed after the game was finished, he took the longest way through the woods, for he wanted to cool his head, heated by the game and the warmth of the room. But when he entered the tent softly, so as not to awaken Arthur, he saw with surprise that his cot was empty.

It was a late moon, and Wissotzky stood in its light, gazing at the empty bed. He felt uncertain and uneasy. He was positive Arthur had not been in the

camp before he left. Then he must be in the woods or on the lake. The moon must have tempted him.

He let fall the flap of the tent and started out to find him in the woods, taking a trail which kept him near the lake. He looked through the trees for a boat, but there was none to be seen. He had walked for a quarter of an hour, when he thought he might walk all night, in the possible case that Arthur had thrown himself down in the woods and gone to sleep, which he was sometimes in the habit of doing.

The trail darkened. The moon had gone under a cloud, but he stumbled on, his footsteps muffled by the soft carpet of pine needles. When the moon shone out again he saw he had come to the spot where the lake ended among boulders and fallen trees, a wild, romantic spot. Then his footsteps were suddenly arrested and his eyes frozen to the sight the moon revealed.

Mrs. Maynard was sitting on a slightly raised bank over the stream. She was in her white negligée, having thrown her cloak aside, and her hair fell loosely over her shoulders and bosom. Her face gleamed like marble and her eyes bore the rapt, devout expression which had puzzled Wissotzky on more than one occasion, and gave her now the look of a sibyl.

Arthur was sitting at her feet, gazing up into her face, his hand grasping one of the falling strands of her hair, and she was drawing her fingers mechanically through his thick blond curls, her face giving no sign that she realized his presence. But Wissotzky's soul sickened, for in Arthur's upturned eyes he read the look of an abject slave.

He quickly retraced his steps to the tent, wishing he could obliterate the memory of what he had seen. When Arthur came later, he let him think he was asleep. He wondered if Mrs. Maynard would get to her room unobserved, and he remembered the doors of the camp were never locked. His nature revolted against her for stooping to enslave a boy like Arthur, and this feeling toward her now partook of a personal resentment. She had struck him through

his professional pride, which aimed to fulfill Comyns's hopes for the boy. And he considered this present obsession dangerous, owing to Arthur's retarded development. He was also puzzled to know why the woman who called herself Mrs. Maynard had chosen to take such risks.

He did not know that after Arthur had left his companion at the camp, she had waited until she thought he had reached the tent, and then had rushed through the moonlit trail again to the same spot where he had found them.

The spell of the moonlit night was upon her and she felt she could not sleep within walls. She did not return to the camp until nearly daybreak.

XV

"I saw you with Arthur at the head of the lake last night," Wissotzky said abruptly next day after dinner.

"Did you?" she asked indifferently.

"Why do you think it worth while to entice this boy?" he went on. "It means nothing to you, but it may result seriously to Arthur—and—I am directly responsible for him."

"You are directly responsible to whom, may I ask?"

"To Doctor Comyns, his physician."

"Comyns?" echoed Mrs. Maynard.

"The eminent alienist, on whose opinion so many criminals have been committed to the insane asylum?"

"The same. I have had the privilege of working with him for the last few years."

"You have been trained in a good school," she said.

"Do you know him?" asked Wissotzky, instantly alert to the strain of bitterness in her voice.

"I met him once, some years ago," she said. "I prefer to forget he exists. I understand your position, as far as Arthur is concerned," she went on. "But I have never made any attempt to entice him. Such an accusation is ridiculous. Neither are you responsible if Arthur chooses to fall in love with me."

"Last night—" he began hesitatingly.

"Oh, that was a mere accident, an impulse. I could not remain in my room. I was stifled and I saw ghosts. Arthur joined me and we ran through the woods together, hand in hand like two children. I felt I was running away from everything that tyrannized over me, into freedom. It was glorious. Finally we sank down exhausted, where you saw us."

"And the ghosts you fled from were laid, for a time?"

"You, too, look as though you saw ghosts," she said.

"The dead rest," he said. "I see ghosts of the living dead. Three friends of mine are dragging their chains in Siberia."

"The dead rest," she echoed with that curious look he had noticed more than once, denoting a phase of morbid hysteria, "but the living dead—"

He bent nearer, his eyes resting on her neck. "You are inclined to be morbid," he said. "It would be better if you should free yourself from certain ideas. All futile thought is waste of the personality, and waste invariably sows the seeds of a nervous degeneration."

"And how can this be prevented?" she asked.

"Cast away everything which reminds you of the past," he said significantly. He smiled as he saw her hand move involuntarily to her breast, to protect the thing which made her a hopeless slave of fear and of the thoughts which she dreaded. "You have persisted in carrying your jewels about with you, against my advice—burdening yourself needlessly with souvenirs which probably are a constant reminder of your husband's tragic death." He was unable to deny himself the sarcasm of the last few words.

"And do you still persist in believing I wear jewels beneath my gown?"

"Yes," said Wissotzky daringly. "Come, what is it? A pearl necklace? You are fond of pearls, I know."

"Yes," she said with a curious laugh. "I am very fond of pearls; but, as I told you before, I did not carry my jewels

along. They are all with a safe deposit company in New York."

"Not all," said Wissotzky positively. "You have reserved something of which you are particularly fond; perhaps it is merely a single jewel," he hazarded.

She made him no answer, and in the uncertain glare of the campfire, Wissotzky could feel, rather than see, her face grow rigid and her figure stiffen.

"Since I know," he whispered, "it would be best for you to give up the emerald to me. You can trust me absolutely. Think it over," he said quietly as he left her.

XVI

THE Judge found Mrs. Maynard unusually silent and preoccupied. But she assented eagerly to his proposition that they should spend the whole of the following day in the woods.

She did not appear at breakfast, and Wissotzky saw her walking leisurely down to the boathouse with Eph behind her, carrying shawls and books and pillows, and he understood that she had not yet come to any conclusion, and until she did so, it would be embarrassing for her to meet him. He also realized that she would not relinquish the jewel without a struggle. His interview the night before had left him with an unpleasant feeling of having put the screws upon her.

In the meantime he continued to be amused at Elsie's attempts to inveigle him into a flirtation according to the American idea, his sophisticated mind regarding her naïve attempts to attract him in the same light as the gambols of a kitten.

Comyns had written him that he would like further and more explicit details of the woman with whom the Judge had become infatuated. And Wissotzky was still considering his answer.

It had occurred to him more than once to speak to the Judge concerning her, but his health had so far miraculously improved, and Wissotzky was inclined to let the conditions which had brought

about this favorable result continue for the present, rather than rudely awaken him from his dream.

Bella Cavallo had welcomed the suggestion to spend the day away from the camp, as a timely relief from the sense of Wissotzky's watchful eyes. The sense of immediate danger quickened her pulse, causing her to feel that this day might be the last she could call hers. Therefore she wanted it to yield all of its infinite possibility to the Judge and herself. Her manner became tinged with a feverish excitement of which the Judge grew insensibly aware, infecting him to no small degree. Even without this incentive his passion had reached a crisis. He had schooled himself to silence during the last two weeks, in the fear that he might spoil all by a too quick avowal.

"I sometimes wonder whether you realize how much you are to me," he said abruptly.

Her eyes drooped and she grew pale under the Judge's intent gaze, while her fingers plucked nervously at the mosses of the fallen tree upon which they were sitting. Her heart throbbed with a violence which almost suffocated her.

"I have never consciously thought of happiness," said the Judge, his low voice carrying an undertone of a passionate tenderness. "But I have had an unnamable feeling which lay at the root of my busy life like a canker, a strange sense of dissatisfaction, of incompleteness, which spoke queerly in odd moments. I have seen so much of the dark side of life; I have looked so deeply into the dark forces of human nature—the dark, dreadful forces that lead to crime, forces you do not dream of, which you cannot know the meaning of. I looked too long at the dark side. The claim of other lives grew more and more insistent, until they seemed to draw me down into an abyss of horror. I realized that my 'nerves' were giving way."

He smiled at her, wiping a slight dampness from his forehead.

"The black waves were closing over my head, when you came, with the heavenly sweetness of your smile—and

the mystery of your eyes. It was only this that could have saved me, the dear mystery of your eyes; they drew me slowly, slowly up out of the black depths into life and sunshine. Don't turn them from me now; let me look into them again; let me live over again, and again, as long as life lasts, that first glorious surprise."

The Judge, bending involuntarily nearer, drew her clasped hands passionately to his breast.

"I have waited for you all my life," he said in a hushed voice. "Mine was a full life, but for want of this one crowning touch it came near shipwreck. Isabel—"

He brought her arms up about his neck, gazing fiercely into her eyes, and then, reading in them the answer to his cry, he pressed his lips to hers.

After that one ecstatic kiss, in which the universe spun dizzily about her, Bella Cavallo lay pressed against the Judge's heart in a wild spasm of exultation. Whatever came, she had had this one glorious moment of life. And she was willing to pay the high price she had always paid, for the least that life gave her. But she suddenly remembered that the cost would be the Judge's awakening, and her heart contracted with a fierce physical pain at the thought of what he might suffer through her.

The Judge felt her relaxing in his arms, and he pressed her still closer to him, reanimating her spirit with new strength and confidence. There had been times in her life when she was conscious of a vague longing, a wish that something great and good and strong might lift her to itself. And now, with his arms about her, she felt that this indefinable wish had been granted to her in a fuller sense than it had ever been possible for her to dream of.

He lifted her head gently, and looked into her eyes.

"These golden days—prolonged indefinitely—" he said unsteadily. "This summer is ours, Isabel. I feel the uncertainty of life, since my illness. Wisdom seems to have descended upon me suddenly—the wisdom of taking the moment—Isabel—before it goes—from

us. Will you be my wife at once? Will you leave out all conventional preparation for my sake?"

She looked up, startled. "I must think," she said unsteadily, putting her hand dizzily to her eyes.

She felt that this was the most refined cruelty which her fate had yet practised upon her. Life took the form of a jester, offering her, a beggar, upon a golden salver, a golden fruit which she dared not grasp. She had a moment when, with a sudden sinking of the spirit, she felt as she thought people must feel before death when life passes in quick review and they see it has been lived vainly. Her mind became a pitiless, surging, bitter sea, tossing up weedy refuse and wreckage. She saw herself pushed before the awe-inspiring presence of the young judge; she heard his voice saying: "Do not be afraid. You will be taken care of and shown the way to a better life."

She realized now she must tell him who she was, for if she decided on instant flight from the camp, Wissotzky would enlighten him, and she preferred that he should hear the truth from her.

"I have never wanted anything consciously in my whole life as I want you, Isabel," he said impulsively. "To hold you in my arms—as my wife—means to live in every fiber of my being—I who have never lived. Don't delay this precious moment of life, from scruple. Remember, nothing else counts—there can be nothing so great as our love."

"I—I—am not what you think me," she stammered, and she was surprised at the hoarse sound of her own voice.

The Judge laughed gaily at what he considered an expression of the humility of love.

"I am glad to hear it," he said, "for if you were as perfect as I think you, I fear it would be a little difficult to live with you."

"Take your arms away," she whispered weakly.

"Why?" he said, laughing and holding her more closely to him.

"Because I wish to tell you my whole life from beginning to end; and I can-

not do it—with your arms around me," she answered desperately.

"Why torture yourself with such a recapitulation?" he said. "Let it wait until after we are married. Give yourself to the present, Isabel."

Temptation whispered to her not to dash the cup from his lips at the moment of the draught; to take for him and for herself the happiness which life offered. His awakening would be inevitable, and she knew that the marriage of the Judge to Bella Cavallo would spell ruin to his public career—but in the other scale she put his great primitive need of her.

"Is it yes, Isabel?" urged the Judge, in a tone he vainly tried to render patient.

"Yes," she murmured.

The Judge pressed her small, dark head rapturously to his breast.

"I will try—oh, I will try to be all you believe me," she whispered.

VII

WISSOTZKY understood that she could not yet bring herself to speak to him after last night's revelation. She had evaded him successfully all day—but she must surely understand that he would not give her much longer to decide. For, now that she was aware of his knowledge, to let things drift would make it seem as if he were a party to her crime.

He strolled meditatively down to the lake in order to enjoy the last sunset glow upon the water.

There had been a certain expression on the Judge's face which caused him to wonder whether things had not gone far enough, whether it was not his duty to tell him now what manner of woman he was spending his days with, risking the danger to his returning health. And he wondered, in case she delivered the jewel, whether she would make the condition that the Judge should not be told. He found himself in a disagreeable situation.

Suddenly he saw the gleam of white drapery moving swiftly between the trees on the opposite shore. He watched

it for a moment, then became convinced that it was the woman of whom he was thinking. Possibly she had hurried her toilette in order to talk with him while the Judge was dressing, and had come down to the lake to seek him. He retraced his steps, following the trail in the woods around the lake which would bring him to her. She was walking to the spot where just below some giant rocks the lake was supposed to be several hundred feet deep.

When he came within a few yards of her, he was startled to see her hurl something in the lake that gleamed in the last reflection of the sun with a thousand prismatic rays—before it sank!

He was at her side in an instant.

"What have you done?" he said tensely, catching her wrist in his iron grip.

"What have I done?" she cried, flashing at him that lawless look, which had startled him on the first day of her arrival. "I have thrown a stone into the lake." She wrenched her wrist away from him, and threw out her arms with a superb gesture which told him she had taken his advice in a sense he had not dreamed of—had cast away the thing which had made her a slave of fear. In the light of her eyes and her exultant smile, he read that her mad act had contained a still deeper motive—and he understood that she felt free of her old life, that she had thrown it from her forever with the emerald, into the fathomless depths of the lake.

XVIII

"THE Judge has been studying a map of the Adirondacks all day," complained Mrs. Durant. "I wonder if he means to follow her?"

Wissotzky looked at her meditatively. He had asked himself the same question. Bella Cavallo's departure the morning after her irretrievable action had not surprised him. He had attributed it entirely to himself—and he did not wonder that, after what had occurred, she found it impossible to live under the same roof with him. He also

blamed himself, through the clumsiness of his method, for the loss of the emerald. When he told Bella Cavallo of his knowledge, he had not gauged her capacity for desperate action. With the wisdom that always comes too late, he told himself he could easily have possessed himself of the jewel. All that was necessary was to see that she slept heavily one night. He possessed a passkey to all the rooms, and, while she slept, he could have taken it from her neck. He might have known that she would not tamely surrender the jewel.

He had still to enlighten the Judge, though he much preferred the latter's eyes to open of their own accord. When Bella Cavallo left, he thought that at any rate the affair was ended for the time being—until he began to ask himself the same question which Mrs. Durant had not scrupled to express. And again it occurred to him that the Judge might not be as ignorant as he supposed. In this event, an open statement on his part would put them both in an awkward position.

"Whatever has come over Arthur Hallway?" said Mrs. Durant, which was only another effort on her part to induce Wissotzky to speak of a subject upon which he was generally uncommunicative.

"I cannot arouse him," said Wissotzky, studying the end of his cigarette with a frown.

Mrs. Durant looked at him sympathetically.

"I am sure you have done all one could possibly expect. Your interest has been quite unprecedented, considering you were strangers when you came here. I am surprised that a boy who has been always so delicately nurtured was allowed to go away alone. Why don't you write to his father?"

"Such a proceeding will not cure his mind," said Wissotzky. "In fact, if his father should deliver to him what Americans term a 'calling down,' it might have a very disastrous effect on the boy's nervous system. He is obsessed—and now that the object of his obsession has fortunately removed herself, time may cure him."

"Do you think the affair is really ended?" inquired Mrs. Durant eagerly. "The worst of it is that the Judge is engaged to a lovely Boston girl who belongs to one of the oldest families in New England." Mrs. Durant's statement was based upon the fact that she had once asked Mrs. Weatherbee if there was any foundation to the rumor that there was to be a match between Priscilla and the Judge, and Mrs. Weatherbee's hopes had been high enough at that time to warrant her in answering in the affirmative.

"Indeed! You surprise me," said Wissotzky thoughtfully. "It would be natural to suppose that the Judge corresponded with his fiancée, would it not?"

"Assuredly."

"Well, up till now he has been quite indifferent to the mail, with the exception of the first week, when he wrote every day to his physician."

"And now?" prompted Mrs. Durant.

"Since Mrs. Maynard has left, he cannot control his impatience. He takes the bag from the boy, and searches for the letter himself with fingers that tremble with eagerness."

The following morning the Judge breakfasted alone before the others rose. When they appeared he signified his intention of leaving the camp for a while. "I thought I would like to see something of the mountains," he said. "It's quite possible I shall return."

He was spared further explanation by the arrival of the buckboard to take him to the station, and, shaking hands hastily all around, he took his seat.

"I hope you will let us hear from you," said Wissotzky, conscious of a covert excitement in the Judge's manner.

"Certainly," said the Judge. "I will write tomorrow. Good-bye. God bless you all!"

Then they all went in to breakfast, with the exception of Arthur, who stood moodily gazing at the lake.

"Come, Arthur," said Wissotzky, taking his arm.

"He's gone to *her!*" said Arthur savagely.

Wissotzky shrugged his shoulders. "It is not our affair," he said.

"It is mine!" said Arthur angrily. "I wanted to go with her—if it had not been for you!"

"Don't be foolish," said Wissotzky kindly. "She would not have allowed it."

"Well—I could have followed her then. I begged you to go with me!"

"I came here for a vacation," said Wissotzky patiently, "and I am a physician, not a courier! Besides, can't you see she did not want us?"

Wissotzky had no doubt that the Judge had left with the intention of joining the lady. The affair had resolved itself to its legitimate solution, and he concluded that it was perhaps just as well he had not spoken.

There was no doubt that Doctor Comyns would rather approve of the whole thing. Earlier in the Judge's career, it might have prevented the collapse inevitably foreshadowed by the strain of his life. And it was to be hoped that by the autumn the Judge would have outlived his passion for this strangely fascinating woman; also that he would be prudent as regarded appearances. The fact that Doctor Comyns had met Bella Cavallo, according to her own statement, added some zest to Wissotzky's anticipation of a future interview.

The next day Mrs. Durant received a letter from the Judge. She read it with a stunned expression, then gave it to Wissotzky.

"Read it aloud, please," she said. "It is intended for us all." Her voice and her manner inspired Wissotzky with a strange misgiving. He took the letter and read:

"DEAR FRIENDS:

"Mrs. Maynard and I were married this afternoon at the Episcopal church in Lake Placid. We wished our friends at the camp to know before the news was given out officially. It was desirable to avoid publicity because of my recent breakdown. It was also the earnest wish of my beloved wife to be married as quietly as possible. With our united regards,

"GRAVES EDWARD REVERCOMBE."

No one seemed to think of anything to say. Elsie, glancing from Wis-

sotzky's face to her mother's, received an impression that the Judge's marriage must mean some form of calamity.

Suddenly, in the dead silence which followed the reading of the message, Mrs. Durant made a sign to Wissotzky, with a significant glance at Arthur. And when he looked, he saw something in the boy's face which aroused an instant's sense of alarm.

"Arthur," he said, putting his hand on his shoulder.

But Arthur fled from his touch back to the camp, and Wissotzky found him lying upon his bed shaking from head to foot with a nervous chill. An hour later he was raving in delirium, and Elsie was riding her pony furiously to the station with messages to New York. Wissotzky had sent for nurses, and he had asked Comyns to come to the camp, if possible.

Pending the arrival of reinforcements from New York, he fought the fever single-handed. Under all his great anxiety burned the feeling of self-condemnation. His vacillation had been fatal to the Judge. He felt like an actor who has omitted to speak the one line needful for the unfolding of the drama, and he became a prey to the futile rage which consumes people when they have disobeyed the instinct which prompts them to action, through self-consciousness, or a sense of honor which might or might not be false according to varying individual standards.

He told himself that this woman had triumphed over them all. She had thrown a glamour over the Judge, rendering him blind and deaf to his inherited instincts and ideals, and in marrying him she had dealt a vicious blow to the society which proclaimed her an outcast; and he had played into her hands and sealed his lips for her. A chill coursed down his spine at the thought that there was still Comyns to be reckoned with.

He came the following morning, accompanied by two nurses. He had traveled all night, but he refused breakfast until he had seen the patient and heard all the details of the case. When he had examined Arthur, who, after

raving all night, had relapsed into torpor, he gave some directions to the nurses, then walked briskly out of the tent. Wissotzky followed him. So far not a word had been spoken of the Judge. The fact that Comyns had not even asked for him seemed ominous. The alienist paused at a spot out of earshot of the camp, and asked shortly for the history of the case.

Wissotzky recounted the daily and continued signs of Arthur's obsession, modestly eliminating any mention of his own efforts to cure the boy, which he hoped the doctor would take for granted.

"I presume it is the same woman you mentioned in connection with the Judge," said Comyns, "although you neglected to say so. It is not likely that two women of such deadly powers of fascination would appear at the same time in the same spot."

Suddenly Doctor Comyns whipped a newspaper from his pocket and pointed to a headline referring to the Judge's marriage.

"I delivered two patients into your charge," he said. "I find one lying ill with a dangerous inflammation of the brain—the other married to a mysterious woman who has the dangerous power of inspiring sudden passions in men."

"The Judge was of course irresponsible. But where was the controlling hand, the cool brain which should have acted for him while his was on fire? Where was the danger signal flashed to me? Did you ever warn him against this woman? Did you put out a finger to turn him from this folly?"

"No," said Wissotzky slowly. "I feared a setback; the cure had worked like a charm."

"*You have failed!*" hissed the alienist.

XIX

THE Judge and his wife returned to New York by the end of October. They had spent four blissful months, wandering as the spirit moved them. Fully restored to health, browned by long exposure, the Judge at once took up his duties with a firm, refreshed mind.

He had suggested buying or renting a house, which his wife should furnish and decorate according to her individual taste. But Bella would not consent to this plan. She professed herself absolutely ignorant of housekeeping, and prayed him to continue the arrangements of his bachelor life for a time.

An enormous house in the neighborhood of Gramercy Park had been turned into apartments, and the Judge had occupied one of these for the last ten years. He usually kept a cook, and Eph managed the rest. His wife professed her willingness to be pleased by what pleased him. Her attitude secretly delighted the Judge. He had been rather uneasy at the prospect of uprooting, for he loved his home, furnished entirely with relics taken from the old place in Virginia. On the other hand, he had expected to give his jewel a setting, and wished to see her reigning in a big house with a staff of servants.

"You are sure you are not lonely, my dear?" said the Judge one morning, as he kissed his wife good-bye. "I shall call you up as usual, during the day." He was already commencing to look preoccupied and to sit up at night over his papers, and in the engrossing claims of his work he always had the fear that she would feel neglected. They had been so constantly together.

"I won't be at all lonely. There is still a great deal to be done about the place," she replied.

Later in the day Eph announced a visitor. Bella had already dressed for dinner in a loose white teagown, with the Revercombe pearls twisted about her neck and falling over her bosom almost to her waist.

She rose at the name which Eph pronounced, trembling in every nerve, although she had schooled herself for months for this very moment.

"Mrs. Burns?" she repeated. "I don't know such a person."

"It's one of them book canvassin' women," said Eph.

"Well, let her come in," she said.

He returned with a woman of medium height and rather stout, a black veil

drawn tightly over her face. She held a book under her arm.

"I thought I might interest you in one of our publications. It's an exceptional opportunity," she commenced, in a shrill, falsetto voice.

"Won't you sit down?" said Bella.

The visitor went to the door which Eph had closed after him and tried it, then embraced the Judge's wife vociferously, kissing her on both cheeks.

"I'm awful glad to see you, Bella; you're looking fine. Don't stand staring at me as if I was a ghost. It's me, all right, old Jennie Burns." She tore off her veil, disclosing a somewhat dissipated-looking face, highly rouged, whose wrinkles belied the youth of the black, elaborately curled coiffure. She wore a small, stylish hat, rakishly poised over one eye.

"Say, Bella, how did you ever bring it off? The luck of you!"

There was no mistaking the sincerity of the speaker. Her face radiated with a whole-souled congratulation. The genuine feeling which beamed from the elder woman's eyes melted the ice which Bella felt freezing about her heart at this visible embodiment of all that she had tried to put behind her. And she realized that, though it is easy to say one is finished with certain things, one is never finished. What has once had a place will not be put away. Remembrances of past kindnesses from the hands of Jennie Burns rushed upon her, shaming her from her cold resolve to be finished with everything connected with her old life.

"You're a queen, Bella," declared Jennie, as they returned to the library, after looking through the other rooms.

"For a day," said Bella bitterly.

"Never mind," said Jennie sharply.

"You're married and the Judge has got to look after you; you've got the law on your side now, Bella. Think of it—the law *on your side!*" She commenced to shake with silent laughter. "There's no reason to worry as long as you live, my dear. You've feathered your nest. I never thought it was in you. You were always a bit queer. But it would have been better if you could have gone

with the Judge to Europe for a year."

"The Judge's place is here," said Bella. "There is always the danger of someone recognizing me. I am prepared for anything. It's got to come out." She threw her arms desperately about the elder woman, crying: "I want to keep this as long as I can, Jennie. It's my first real home."

"So you shall—you shall keep it, Bella," said the elder woman, holding her and patting her. "Don't you worry that any of your old friends will give you away. Someone in your high society'll do that for you. They can see you're not one of 'em, Bella. And they'll never be satisfied until they pry it out. You're a strange bird, and they won't leave a feather on you. What have you told the Judge?"

"He thinks I am a widow with independent means."

"How is your money invested?" asked Jennie practically.

"He hasn't asked."

"He will," said Jennie. "Be ready for him. And if you need a relative, I'm here—dear old Aunt Jennie, from Kalamazoo! Say, Bella, haven't you anything to offer a person?"

Bella went hurriedly into the dining room, returning with a small tray bearing a decanter and glasses. Her visitor helped herself liberally, smacking her lips after she had drained the glass.

"Old," she said. Then she took a cigarette from a tabouret. Bella also took one, and lit it mechanically, then sank down upon the cushions piled upon the bear-skin before the fire.

"Don't you want to know something about Brettner?" Jennie blurted suddenly.

"Well?" said Bella, with a note of despair in her voice.

"I told him nothing—he knows nothing—except that you were ill and ordered to the country, and that I hear from you very seldom. But he knows there's something up. Every time I go to see him, he says, 'Is she back yet?' That's all he's living on."

"What does he wish for?" demanded Bella.

"He's hoping they'll give him the chair," said Jennie, lowering her voice; then she suddenly dabbed her eyes with the ball she had made of her handkerchief.

Bella caught her arm. "Rather than see him grow old in prison, his beautiful life withering up—"

"My God!" cried Mrs. Burns suddenly. "So young, Bella; the beauty of him, the strength of him!"

"He would have bought the world for me," said Bella.

"When it came to a decent fellow like Brettner, of good people, just starting out in life, I'd have had scruples, if I'd been you, Bella. When the Judge gave him his chance, that was the time you should have broken with him."

Bella stood twisting her hands, her mind reviewing all the circumstances of her intimacy with Brettner.

"The trial will be on next week," said Jennie hesitatingly. "Afterward he'll be taken away."

"I will go to see him before the trial," said Bella, with an effort.

"God bless you," said Jennie fervently. "It's just as if a dying man had asked you. Good-bye."

XX

WHEN she heard the Judge's step in the hall that evening the languor which had followed the departure of her caller gave place to an instantaneous life; she rushed to the door to meet him. Every evening since their return, when the Judge's arms drew her to his breast in a close embrace, seemed a day gained for both of them in the face of the constant chance of exposure.

After dinner the Judge took up his paper mechanically and then let it fall on his knees, while his eyes met those of his wife, who knelt by the fire, watching him quietly.

"The Weatherbees are home," he said at length. "The General called me up today. They're coming to see us tomorrow evening. Anxious to meet you, of course. Comyns and his wife are coming with them."

"Comyns!" echoed Bella, rising to

her feet, every nerve alert. "Is he the alienist, whose opinion has sent so many criminals to the insane asylum?"

"The same," answered the Judge jubilantly. "Oh, Comyns is quite a man. He is as sharp as a needle, with eyes that bore through you like gimlets."

The description was enough to corroborate Bella's first instinct of fear. Now she knew that her peace and that of the Judge depended upon the power of recognition possessed by two green eyes. And she realized that it had not taken long to verify Jennie's words that she had nothing to fear from her old friends, but it would be one of the Judge's friends who would pry out her history. She knew Comyns and his relentless convictions too well to hope that he would spare her or the Judge, when he was once positive that she and Bella Cavallo were one.

"Comyns has been up to the woods for a spell," said the Judge. "He has just returned. He called me up this morning. I inquired after Wissotzky, and he says he is back, and quite restored to health."

The chances of Wissotzky betraying her to Comyns had been a source of speculation with her ever since he had surprised her with the fact that he was Comyns's assistant. She felt immeasurably grateful to him, for there were many men in the same position who would have considered it their duty to warn the Judge. But when she gave Wissotzky credit for his generosity, she did not know how long he had hesitated perilously near to the verge of betrayal, when something he could not explain still held him back while the voice of his duty said, "Speak!" Now that she knew Comyns was an old friend of the Judge, the question obtruded itself again in a more vital form.

"I always liked Wissotzky," said the Judge thoughtfully. "You seemed to like him, too."

"Yes," said Bella doubtfully, thinking that she had never asked herself the question. It had never been a question of liking between them, but a match of wits.

"I thought so," said the Judge, "and I told Comyns to bring him along."

"Oh—did you? How delightful, Comyns and Wissotzky—master and pupil!" answered Bella, and began to laugh immoderately.

XXI

"MAYNARD, Maynard!" said the General, who had been leaning over Bella's chair, gazing admiringly in her eyes, that were brilliant from inner excitement, though she appeared outwardly calm. "I once knew people of that name in England. But your husband was an American, you said?"

"Yes, American," murmured Bella, with an absent expression.

"But you do not come from pure American stock yourself, my dear," persisted the General.

"No, indeed," said the Judge's wife. "I am of Spanish origin."

"Born here or abroad?" asked the General in an interested tone.

"I was born here," said Bella hesitatingly, trying to remember whether she had told the Judge she was born in America or in Spain. "I always talked Spanish with my mother when a child. Perhaps you have noticed that my English is not pure."

"Spanish blood!" said Comyns in a voice of pleased surprise.

All the evening, under the flow of conversation pertaining to Narragansett, the North Woods, the coming election and other current topics, the Judge's bride was the center of a furtive observation.

In dressing for this evening she had succumbed to the inclinations of her own taste and the natural vanity of a bride, in place of catering to her preconceived knowledge of the Judge's conservative friends. Mrs. Comyns and also Mrs. Weatherbee were wearing gowns of last year's style, but Bella was the last word of the edict which had gone forth some months before that the lines of the figure were not to be concealed.

"I am indebted to you, Comyns," said the Judge a little later as he fondly grasped the doctor's shoulder, "for

sending me to the spot where I met my wife."

"Don't thank me yet; it is rather too soon in the day," said Comyns drily.

Perhaps it was not so much these words as a vague suggestion which chilled the Judge unconsciously. He felt, without acknowledging it, so far to himself, the lack of a whole-hearted enthusiasm on the part of his old friends.

Bella, who knew by heart every varying shade of expression upon the Judge's face, saw with foreboding the glow fade from his eyes and the spontaneous smile become stereotyped, because his friends felt, as she herself felt, that she was a "strange bird" among them; and she wondered how long it would take to verify Jennie's prophecy that "they would not leave a feather on her."

She was keenly aware that Comyns was studying her under his spectacles, coldly and curiously, as he would have studied a specimen under the microscope, and every time she accidentally met his eyes, she felt a sensation of cold horror, which was the duplication of a similar feeling she had experienced in the past, revived again under the singular look of this man, in which there seemed to her nothing which was human, but only a brain, operating with unerring mechanical precision.

"When did you return from the woods, Doctor Wissotzky?" she asked.

"In September," he answered. "I have been working very hard, and I have had a great deal of anxiety." She understood from his glance and his tone that she was in some way accountable for his anxiety.

"Do smoke," she said artfully. "I know you are not happy without your cigarette."

He smiled, taking out his case and offering it to her; then upon second thought he withdrew it.

"I should like one of your Russian cigarettes," she said. But he still held the case from her reach.

"It is not advisable," he said in a low tone.

"It is my habit to smoke, and the Judge has never objected. He is the only one who counts."

Wissotzky shrugged his shoulders as he allowed her to help herself from his case.

"It is all that is needed, the last touch to put them against her," he thought.

"By the way, did you not mention that you had met Doctor Comyns?" he said.

"He has not recognized you, so far."

"Perhaps you will think fit to refresh his memory," said Bella, insinuatingly.

"No," said Wissotzky, smoking calmly, "I shall not do so."

His generosity softened her heart unconsciously toward life. The feeling that Wissotzky had tacitly admitted by his policy of silence that she should have a chance, gave her a sense of moral support and allied him with her against the forces she was fighting.

XXII

WHEN Doctor Comyns had seen his wife home, he accompanied Wissotzky to the sanatorium, which was but a few doors from his residence. There he went immediately to his study, seated himself in his big chair by the table, leaned his head back and closed his eyes. This was a characteristic attitude with him when thinking out a difficult proposition.

After some moments it appeared that he had found some clue to what he sought, for a sudden expression of mingled incredulity and satisfaction appeared. He rose and pressed the electric button above a cabinet at one end of the room. Taking some papers from a drawer, he examined them one by one under the light of his reading lamp. They were the records of some of his earlier cases. Finally he paused, his expression deepening into triumph. He had found the corroboration of the conclusion at which he had arrived by a process of severely concentrated thought. Simply these few notes jotted in his own crabbed, irregular hand: "Bela Cavallo—aged sixteen—morbid hysteria, interesting."

He leaned back, searching his memory for more details.

"Interesting," he had marked on his

notes. She had stood out from the rest, in that place where all women looked curiously alike in their shapeless uniforms, arousing his professional interest, and even something more. Ten years ago he had not been quite so hardened in his present mould, but he had set his foot viciously upon the feeling engendered by a girl in a House of Correction. Her eyes swollen with weeping, her hair strained back in the style approved by the matron in charge, there had been still something distinctive and unusual about her which she shared with the brilliant woman he had seen this evening. She had implored him to use his influence to get her out of the institute, and the indefinable charm of the smile with which she tried to tempt him was the same then as now. He had pronounced the case morbid hysteria, and coldly outlined to the attendant the necessary treatment. And to her he had advised submission as the best policy. There had been no fault in his manner. It had been just the proper mixture of professional and judicial reproof proper under the circumstances, without the slightest adulteration of an involuntary or humane sympathy. But, in reality, her beautiful eyes, with their expression of an animal in a trap, had aroused a moment of inward uneasiness. The eyes of the Judge's wife, encountering his once or twice this evening, had borne for a fleeting second the same expression. She had recognized him, without a doubt, and not with pleasure. After ten years the chance of life had brought them together under not dissimilar circumstances.

After a quarter of an hour's meditation, he drew the telephone toward him and talked at some length with a chief of a prominent detective bureau, a man with whom he had more than a passing acquaintance. The chief, in consideration of the urgent hurry of the alienist, made it convenient to call upon him within half an hour.

Then he sent for Wissotzky.

"When I first saw the woman whom the Judge married in an ill-fated moment," said Comyns without preamble, "she looked indescribably familiar. But

I could not place her all evening. A few moments' quiet, however, sufficed to remind me where I met her. It was in the special ward of the Women's Reformatory. These notes were the proofs that my memory was correct."

Wissotzky took the notes from his hand with a mystified expression.

"You astound me," he said at length.

"This is the tragic result of your neglect of trust," replied Comyns.

"The Judge, as you see, has regained his mental balance," began Wissotzky cautiously, after a disagreeable pause.

"Apparently," said Comyns drily. "Under artificial stimulus. His condition could be compared to the moral lassitude produced by a pleasurable drug. His awakening will be a horrible thing to contemplate."

"It appears to me," said Wissotzky, with a certain misgiving induced by the doctor's words, "that he is now normal and balanced. Before, everything was subsidiary to the brain—now, the other part of his nature has come into play."

"At the expense of the moral values. To live with such a woman in holy matrimony means moral degradation. She is a poison flower. The Judge will loathe himself when he learns the truth."

The doorbell rang impatiently. Comyns hastened to explain the nature of the visit he expected. Wissotzky listened without comment.

As the chief entered, with an air of expectant interest, Wissotzky left the room silently. The two men measured each other as they passed.

XXIII

SEVERAL days later, Wissotzky faced Comyns again in his study, with folded arms, his sallow skin blanched to a sickly yellow.

The alienist was forcing him to hear the evidence which the chief had obtained, and the odor of the exhumed corpse nauseated him—while Comyns's voice in every fact that he read aloud directed an accusation.

"This means social, moral and professional ruin," said Comyns. "Do you

realize this, Wissotzky? If not, pray, try to do so. It is a poor compensation for me to know that you realize the effects of your negligence."

"Social and professional, yes," said Wissotzky, "but morally, no. The Judge's nature will only take a higher moral value from the fight with these opposing forces."

"So you go upon the premise that the experience will be good for him—eh, Wissotzky?" said his torturer cheerfully.

"I hope," answered Wissotzky imperturbably, "that the eternal moral value in the Judge's character will rise above conditions."

"There are things that one cannot rise above," said the alienist. "If it is known that he married the woman in the Brettner case, his honor as a judge will be attacked. He will be accused of having been unduly influenced at Brettner's trial. That is enough to break his heart."

"But he can prove that he had not met her at the time of the trial."

"He would be accused of having bought the proof."

The alienist rose suddenly from his chair. He had recalled a conversation at the Judge's home—and the words of his wife occurred to him again with a peculiar significance.

"I believe that this woman holds the key to the mystery of the Warren heirloom," he said, looking keenly at Wissotzky.

"Impossible!" said Wissotzky under his breath.

"Her words, which sounded wild to me at the time, lead me to suppose that she has stolen the emerald, and made away with it—in the fear of detection. If I had her here—here facing me—I could compel her to tell me where she has hidden it. A desperate character, a criminal in the grain. The only hope for the Judge is to get rid of her quietly—though it should take every penny he possesses."

Comyns pulled out his watch. "I expect him every moment."

"The Judge—here?" said Wissotzky.

"Yes. He has rung me up twice within the last week—but I refused to see

him until I had full possession of the facts. You had better remain within sound of my ring. The disclosure which I am compelled to make may drive him beyond the power of reason."

"You mean—that—you are going to show the evidence?" said Wissotzky. His lips grew pale at the thought.

"That is my painful duty," answered Comyns firmly. He looked into the younger man's face. "Do you question my action?"

"Yes," said Wissotzky. "I believe it would be far better for his eyes to open of their own accord."

"I am nursing a forlorn hope that it can be hushed up—that there may be just time to get rid of the woman quietly before the scandal."

"And are you so sure that the Judge will desire to do so?" said Wissotzky slowly.

"Wissotzky," said Comyns in an exasperated tone, "you come of a law-abiding race. I am curious concerning the wild strain which I have detected in you—to judge from your words at times. You question the only course which could vindicate the Judge's honor."

"First, let him look within," said Wissotzky, lifting his finger. "He was ripe for her."

The doorbell rang loudly. The sound brought an ominous significance to the two men.

"It is the Judge," said Wissotzky, listening.

Comyns threw out his arms and arranged his cuffs, a sign with him of extreme nervousness. Then they waited in silence.

The Judge entered hurriedly, shook hands heartily with Wissotzky, then grasped Comyns, who had risen to receive him, affectionately by the shoulders.

"Only five minutes late, old man. I know your mania for punctuality."

He threw himself into the easy chair opposite the Judge, then noticed that Wissotzky had left the room.

"What's the trouble with him?" asked the Judge, jerking his head toward the door. "He looks as yellow as a guinea."

"Bilious," said Comyns.

"Too bad," answered the Judge. "That fellow needs more exercise. He ought to ride ten miles every morning. I have never felt better in my life—as you may see for yourself."

"You're looking well," said Comyns, after a moment's inspection.

"I work with a new zeal, a new hope. There's a woman at my fireside—such a woman!"

Comyns impatiently rustled the papers containing the evidence intended for the Judge, lying directly in front of him upon the table.

"Yes, you old cynic," laughed the Judge. "Affect not to hear me. That doesn't alter things. You don't give Isabel credit for the change in me. I was a nervous wreck when I left this office last spring. Why—I—I saw things, Comyns. Suddenly I was taken right out of myself by a woman's—I should say a girl's—innocent, sweet smile. They were a wonderland—those eyes—"

"Granted—all that," said Comyns sharply, with a dismissing wave of his hand. "*But why marry her?*" He flung the question at the Judge in an accusing fury bred of the sudden connection of his mind with the Judge's raptures and the evidence of the papers under his hand.

The Judge looked at him uncomprehendingly for a second, then, as the doctor leaned forward, returning his gaze significantly, his full meaning flashed upon him. He rose instantly from his chair, staggering slightly, as though he had received a blow. In another second, his long, nervous hands had closed upon the doctor's throat.

Comyns, anticipating the action, had touched an electric bell upon his table, and the Judge in his blind fury felt himself struggling in Wissotzky's powerful grasp. The latter, pinioning the Judge's arms, looked at Comyns for instructions. He motioned him to release the Judge.

Wissotzky forced him gently into the chair he had just vacated, where he lay breathing heavily, his eyes staring, like a man suffering from a stroke.

"You can go, Wissotzky," said Comyns. Then, as Wissotzky hesitated,

fearing further violence from the Judge, he nodded reassuringly.

Wissotzky left the room with his noiseless tread, like that of a big animal's padded feet, and paced the hall within sound of the bell.

The spectacle of the Judge, whom he had always seen self-contained, diffusing his whole-hearted personality in everything he did and said, shaking Comyns by the throat like a rat, affected him in no small measure, bringing home a sense of the tragedy precipitated by his passivity, the strange lack of initiative which, in place of an actor in the drama, had made of him merely a spectator.

After the door had closed behind Wissotzky, the Judge sat staring at Comyns with a peculiar expression of fascinated horror, as though some new and noxious type of animal had suddenly taken shape before him. His sudden access of rage had left him unnerved, incapable of speech.

The doctor rose, and rearranged his necktie before the glass, with precise, perfectly steady fingers and an unruffled repose of manner.

"I was quite prepared for your action," he said, "but my tie, unfortunately, is lacking in mentality." He patted it solicitously. "I don't bear you the slightest resentment, in consequence. In fact, I consider your action the highly proper thing under the circumstances. Judge Revercombe, of the Revercombes of Virginia, could not have done less. In reality, if you had not made that magnificent bluff at strangling me to death, I should have been very much disappointed in you."

The Judge continued to gaze at him silently, and the doctor stretched out one arm and inspected his cuff, discovering to his discomfort that it projected an inch further than its companion.

"Needless to say, I did not ask you that very significant question without being fully prepared to explain myself," said Comyns, pushing the erring cuff back to its rightful position, after which he held out both arms for a serious inspection. "I might preface this explanation with the assurance that I deeply deplore the vital necessity of this

conversation. I presume, however, that you are not interested in this assurance."

The Judge shook his head.

"I did not expect you to be—at present. But we are both men who do not live in the moment. I simply make the assurance so that you will remember it at a future time. Your nerves are under tension. You think this preamble absolutely absurd and unnecessary. Have patience. I am obliged to make my position clear in the matter—to justify myself for the disclosure which you shall presently hear.

"We both belong to the same sphere in life—we have obtained our professional eminence by honorable efforts and early struggles. The obstacles we overcame are known to ourselves alone. There is no episode, so far as I am concerned, that I would rather the world did not know—and I am willing to stake my professional reputation on the same being the case with you. That in itself means that we have put our feet on a few temptations. We are now no longer young. We have passed the dangerous age, when we are liable to do anything to hurt us in our public career. Stretch your imagination to the utmost and fancy one—either one—of us in a moment of unfortunate weakness and blindness making one of those terrific blunders that only very young people are guilty of making—a blunder which will cost us *all* that we have wrested from the world, public esteem or even personal honor. Under these conditions it might be considered justifiable for one of us to help the other retrieve himself before it is too late."

The Judge, whose whole being had resolved itself into an ear for Doctor Comyns's explanation, made a movement of his dry lips, which Comyns construed into an assent.

The question, "Why marry her?" had struck a blow at all the Judge considered most sacred, and he had struck back in defense, but the dry sincerity of the doctor's tone carried a certain conviction. At times his happiness had seemed strangely unreal to him, and now he realized that this vague sense had materialized.

"It is the duty of men like us to uphold one another," continued Comyns.

"Before you go any farther," interrupted the Judge, lifting a warning finger and speaking with a physical effort, "do you realize that you are violating the ordinary code of honor, which forbids a gentleman to speak against a woman?"

"I am sacrificing the ordinary code in order to justify the word 'friendship,'" Comyns said stiffly, "but more to the great primary necessity of upholding a standard which is in danger of falling. It is not you and I alone—it is the class for which we stand—"

"I will listen to no accusation against the woman I revere," said the Judge, rising from his chair.

The alienist smiled. "You are at liberty to use your own discretion as far as that is concerned."

"If I remain," said the Judge loudly, throwing his hat down upon the table, "it will be only to refute your calumnies."

"You lie!" cried Comyns, directing an accusing finger at him. "Wild horses could not drag you from this room before you heard the truth."

"Then, in God's name, speak!" said the Judge hoarsely. "Don't torture me any longer."

"Your mind is already piling up evidence against her. Innumerable details which you only noticed vaguely, blinded by your passion, are crowding before you, clothed anew by your suspicions."

The Judge buried his face in his hands.

"She has dragged you into the dust," said Comyns, speaking with a bitter emphasis. "You have married the woman known as 'Beautiful Bella,' the notorious woman to whom Brettner's father attributed the ruin of his son. After he was safe in prison and indicted for murder, she conceived the scheme of capturing his judge."

The Judge received the communication silently, and though he still gazed intently at Comyns, his eyes were a blank as his mind rapidly reviewed the last four months. The significance of certain conversations now flashed fully upon him.

Comyns went to the cabinet and unlocked the drawer containing the notes which had supplied the proofs of his suspicions.

"When I first saw your—wife," he said, speaking the word unwillingly, "there was something puzzlingly familiar about her. Upon arriving home after the evening I spent with you, I went immediately to my study. By a process of concentrated thought I discovered where I had met her before. In order to prove the fact I went over my old records. This was the proof I found." He handed a slip of paper to the Judge.

"Bella Cavallo—aged sixteen," read the Judge aloud; then he scanned the additional technical details.

"Committed upon the charge of immorality; sentenced for two years until she became of age," said Comyns. "The girl had been implicated in some murder case, and her nervous system had received a shock which took the form of a peculiar morbid hysteria. She proved interesting as a case—the criminologist was uppermost in me at the time; as a woman, dangerous"—Comyns threw up his hands expressively—"even then. And she has amply fulfilled her promise."

The Judge was going through a queer mental phase. Comyns had torn the veil from his eyes. It seemed to him now he had known this thing all along. With the mention of her name, instantaneously he remembered the part she had played in the case of Maria Rappoldi. His mind, busy reviewing and endeavoring to grasp the astounding reality, did not at once awaken to any personal sense. This accounted for a faint disappointment upon the part of Comyns at the fact that the Judge betrayed no sign of the horror he had anticipated. He felt a vague suspicion that perhaps the Judge was not as ignorant as he had supposed him to be.

"I engaged a skilled detective," he went on, "to ferret out the life of Bella Cavallo from the time she was released from the reformatory until a year ago. I will read his report briefly—and you can go over it at leisure.

"Made her home with a woman called Jennie Burns," read Comyns

hurriedly, "'a notorious character once convicted of pocket picking—moved frequently—their apartment a resort for crooks of every description—no obvious means of living—with the exception that for two years Bella Cavallo posed as a model for artists—with whom she was on intimate terms. She was known at the studios by the name of Beautiful Bella. For the last few years connected with a well known crook named Ferris. Quite recently left him for Brettner. Disappeared at the time of Brettner's arrest.' There, you see, Burrows went further than I intended." Comyns shuffled the papers together triumphantly.

"You have run your prey to the ground," said the Judge. He rose to his feet. Comyns remarked that he stood with difficulty, like an old man. It was the first perceptible sign of the shock he had received.

"What do you propose to do?" inquired the alienist abruptly.

"Go home at once to Isabel, and hear the story from her own lips."

"This is proof conclusive," said the alienist irritably, indicating the report. "This is damning enough. You've got it in black and white, man. What more do you want?"

"Shall I not give my wife, the woman I love, the chance that I give the meanest, poorest criminal—the right to tell her own story?" said the Judge calmly.

"There is but one course open for you," said the alienist sternly. "Otherwise, it means ruin. Get rid of the woman at once—it is only a question of money. She married you for the purpose of blackmailing you later on. Buy her silence. Get her right out of the country, if possible. After a year or so—a divorce in another State. Even if it should become known—through this woman's old associates—the worst that can be said is that you married her in ignorance. The fact that you separated from her when you knew the truth would be your vindication."

"I need no such vindication," said the Judge.

"Not to yourself or to me—or your close friends—but the world; your professional honor is at stake. I advise you

not to see this woman again except with me. She will lie, and hoodwink you—as she has done all along. You are a great judge—but not capable of judging *her*. She has you in her power.”

“Who spoke of judging her?” said the other loudly. “I am her husband, not her judge.”

“A criminal!” cried Comyns, seizing the report from the table and flourishing it in his face. “A prostitute!”

“She is purity itself until I hear the contrary from her own lips,” said the Judge, growing calmer proportionately as Comyns became excited; “and even then, should I judge her—I, a sinner, or you, a sinner?”

“Madman!” answered Comyns. “Take care—she is accountable to the law. I suspect her of a crime, the undiscovered crime which has baffled the New York detectives and police. She is the answer to the mystery of the Warren emerald!”

The Judge grew white to the lips. Just then the telephone rang. Comyns took up the receiver, annoyed at the interruption, but, as he listened, his expression changed to satisfaction.

“Not necessary,” he answered. “That is all the information I require. Thank you. Good-bye.” He hung up the receiver.

“It was your intention, I believe, to seek your wife at once. You will not find her at home. She is at present with her lover—the last one.”

“It is a lie,” said the Judge. “You have been spying upon her.”

“No,” said Comyns coldly. “That would have compromised you. One of Burrows’s men had orders merely to notify me when Brettner received a lady in his cell. As his trial is on the calendar for tomorrow, I imagined some lingering fondness might induce his former mistress to visit him—while he is still in the Tombs. The detective has just notified me that a lady of medium height, slender and graceful and closely veiled, has been with Brettner for the last half-hour.”

The Judge clenched his hands in the effort to restrain another impulse of violence at the slurring emphasis of

Comyns’s words. “Stop!” he said solemnly, raising his hand. “Do not profane the one sacred thing which is left me—my love and hers.”

“God, man!” cried Comyns, rising from his seat in genuine horror. “Don’t tell me you have any feeling left for that woman! Be done with her—with the whole crew of criminals to whom you have given your life and soul. Behold the truth of the prophecy I uttered here in this office when you came to me a moral and physical wreck: ‘No one will be saved, and you yourself will be dragged into the whirlpool!’ The very consciousness of the sympathy that you give these people has made them regard you as an easy prey. Your wife and her lover are laughing at you at this moment—though it may be she has been too clever to let him know of her marriage. He might be desperate enough to strangle her.”

Judge Revercombe felt for the door—blindly, like a drunken man, seeming, as a victim of these burning inward questions, to have lost his relationship with external objects.

XXIV

BELLA had awakened that morning with the thought of Brettner’s impending trial, and the feeling that her promised visit to him should no longer be postponed. But, later, she received a reminder of her promise in the shape of a letter from Jennie Burns, delivered by a dirty little boy who had watched until he saw the Judge leave the house. The letter stated that the trial was called for the following day—and that Brettner would be with his lawyer during the morning—therefore, late in the afternoon would be the best time for her visit.

The day dragged interminably. She dressed herself for the visit in a dark and inconspicuous suit and veiled herself closely.

Brettner’s eyes lighted as they recognized his visitor, and he sprang to his feet.

“Bella!” he cried, as the door closed behind the warden. She put out her

hands—but he drew her impulsively into his arms.

She suffered the embrace for a moment, then put her hands on his shoulders, pushing him gently back.

Five months in prison had made their ravages in his fine physique. His handsome face looked haggard, though suffering had chiseled the features into a greater refinement. His entire aspect was that of a man just recovering from a fever.

"Your face, Bella—let me see your face!" he said tremulously.

She threw back her veil, and he held her back from him, his eyes devouring her.

"Why did you keep away so long?" he asked. "It's so good to see you again," he went on feverishly, without waiting for her answer. "You've changed somehow, Bella," he added. "You have suffered."

"Did you think you suffered alone, Dick?" she said almost fiercely. "You haven't been out of my mind for a day or an hour!"

"You have suffered for me, Bella!" he cried exultantly. "And I am brute enough to be glad—because *you* have lived in every vein, every fiber of me. Ah, Bella—the greatest torture of the last five months has been the torture of not seeing you—the uncertainty—the suspense. If it had not been for your letters—which came so seldom, with no address—I should have thought you dead. I have tortured myself thinking of a thousand possible things which might have happened to you."

"I heard the scuffle that night—the cries of men—a shot—" Bella covered her face with her hands, vividly picturing her fright on the night of his capture. "I thought they had killed you."

"If they only had!" said Dick bitterly. "That was only my own shot—fired aimlessly, frantically—"

She commenced to laugh hysterically. "Burrows—the great Burrows—and all his men—I baffled them all."

"You did the best thing possible—to leave the city," said Brettner. "But there is still a difficult problem to be solved—I should have advised you to confide in Ferris—we can still do so—"

Bella knew he referred to the disposal of the emerald.

"I have solved the problem—alone, Dick," she said, clasping her hands over her breast, "up there in the woods. Oh, Dick, if you only knew the peace of the woods—if I could only bring you to them, they would heal you through and through—"

"Heal me through and through"—I have passed through hell, Bella. And always—that feeling—that it is over—" he said in a dull voice—"that I have come to the end of everything—all our beautiful dreams of a new life—my resolutions—all that was *me*. I seem to look at myself—lying in my grave."

Bella suddenly remembered the Judge's voice, fervent with feeling, speaking in the discussion up in the woods: "The prisoner must have an incentive. Give him an inspiration and a hope."

They had not heard the key turning noiselessly in the outer side of the door, before it opened to admit another visitor.

In the uncertain light from one small window, set high, Brettner regarded with a puzzled expression the tall figure, enveloped in a shapeless ulster, with a soft hat pulled well over the face. But Bella instantly recognized the Judge.

Her heart leaped with a sudden mad terror—then sank heavily. The worst had happened. And she immediately guessed the truth—that Comyns was in some way connected with the Judge's presence in Brettner's cell. She had drawn her veil down simultaneously with his entrance, and retired to the rear of the cell. But she felt instinctively his knowledge of her presence.

"Pardon me," said the Judge, baring his head. "I fear I am intruding." He looked directly at Brettner, whose face became suddenly illumined.

"Judge Revercombe," he stammered.

"The same," returned the Judge, with a grim smile.

"I—I—didn't dare to hope for this," said Brettner brokenly. He put out his hand impulsively; then, overcome by a sudden consciousness, he drew it back,

while his eyes fell before the man to whom his heart had gone out once in a sudden wild impulse of gratitude—this man who had given him his chance, and whom he had betrayed.

The Judge smiled as he noticed the movement. Then he caught Brettner's hand in his—pulled it toward him, and shook it vigorously.

Brettner's chest heaved. He was weak from long confinement and insufficient nourishment. He sank down on the one chair which the cell afforded and covered his face with his hands.

In the stillness which followed, Bella and the Judge were swept by the same emotion which deprived Brettner of the power of speech. The Judge stood over Brettner, his hand on his shoulder, feeling thankful, after the evidence of how much his mere presence meant to Brettner, for the impulse which had led him to his cell. He had even lost for the moment the sense of the man's part in the tragedy of his own life. A powerful current of sympathy had been established between them. It was the Judge and the accused, man to man, as the Judge had often wished it could be, when, removed from the influence of the public and the court, the criminal could be made to drop his defenses. Having reached the kernel and found it good, the Judge felt the exultation of the experimenter who is never far from the laboratory.

His quick intuition had seen at once that Brettner was ignorant of Bella's marriage. Neither guilt nor confusion had marred the pure joy upon Brettner's face, when he recognized his judge.

"It is some time since we met—eh, Brettner?" said the Judge in a natural, pleasant voice. He refrained from glancing at Bella, though he felt an acute sense of her presence.

"Almost a year," said Brettner in a tired voice.

"You have been—here—how long?"

"Five months," answered Brettner bitterly.

"It is too long to keep a man waiting for trial," said the Judge simply.

Brettner looked over at Bella, sitting

motionless upon his cot. Then he drew her gently forward.

"Judge, this is the lady—who was to have been my wife." He threw her veil lightly back.

The Judge rose and bowed, meeting Bella's gaze calmly. Her hands were clasped convulsively to her breast, and her eyes looked at him as the eyes of the girl Bella Cavallo had looked at him ten years before.

"After my trial, when I went out into the world again, I was a marked man," said Brettner. "I was eager and anxious to work, but no one would give me a chance. And she had promised to marry me. We were going to begin a new life together."

"A new life," repeated the Judge.

"But there was the stumbling block—that damning lack of money. A very clever man, belonging to the profession I had given up for the time being," said Brettner, "gave me the information concerning the Warren jewels. I fought against the temptation for a long time; then—" Brettner made a gesture of hopelessness. "If I had my life over again—" he added, looking at the Judge.

"That wish alone—brings you farther; we are getting on, Brettner," said the Judge cheerily.

"One step farther," said Brettner, putting his hand over his eyes, as though gazing over a great distance. "It's too late, now—if they had given me a chance—at the time when you suspended my sentence. If I had another chance—still—"

He flung up his arms impotently.

"You have that chance," cried the Judge in his full, deep voice. "And if you sinned a hundred times—you still have a chance: the chance that God gives and men withhold, the chance of your own soul. It's yours, Brettner—even here—in prison."

He put out his hand and Brettner grasped it eagerly.

"Judge," he said brokenly, "I have no words to thank you for coming here today. I'll try to show it by the future, whatever comes!"

The entrance of the warden signified it was time to depart.

"Take your medicine gracefully," said the Judge, as he went out with his wife.

XXV

In the taxi both were silent and depressed. Reaching home, Bella went immediately to her room and threw herself upon her bed in utter prostration. The inevitable hour of her trial had arrived and she felt totally unprepared. She was not a woman of many words, and now she felt incapable of any defense to the Judge for having deceived him. Her familiarity with his traditions and his past caused her to think that he would consider love not a sufficient justification for having built their married life on lies.

Later, she stood like an automaton and let her maid dress her in one of those long, white, clinging teagowns which she always wore—at home, alone with the Judge. But when she slipped the Revercombe pearls over her head, her hand rose involuntarily to take them off. It seemed to her an audacity to wear them tonight, when she was on trial—the symbol of all she had virtually stolen. Then her hand dropped, with the superb contempt of fate which distinguished her. On this last night she was still Mrs. Judge Revercombe.

The Judge waited for her in the library.

When Bella entered, he did not seem to hear her approach. She felt a sensation of mortal terror. His face had taken on an aged look, and he seemed to have shrunk together in his chair.

Dinner was announced. The Judge rose with an effort and offered her his arm to the dining room.

They hardly tasted their food. After dinner, the Judge smoked a cigar at the table as usual. When they reentered the library, he resumed his chair by the fire. Bella stood out of the range of his eyes, twisting her hands. She felt she could not endure any longer this tension of silence.

"I resign voluntarily the right to everything you have given me. Nothing is mine which I have won by fraud and

lies," she said in an apologetic, almost lifeless tone.

The Judge put up his hand protestingly.

"And what of my love—Isabel?" he said. "Do you also resign your claim to that—the love of a man of forty-eight, which is no light love? That was not won by deceit or lies—but sprang into life the very first moment our eyes met."

Bella's heart leaped with a sudden wild joy.

"I was a beggar when I met you, Graves," she answered, "and I clothed myself with your love, I covered myself with your thoughts. I became what you imagined me to be."

She knelt before him, and he took her face between his hands and looked into her eyes.

"You gave me everything. I am your creation," she murmured. "Though you take everything away, something will always remain to me of you."

"Nothing that I gave you with a full heart shall be taken from you," he whispered hoarsely. "Everything that is mine is yours—my life, my soul. But why did you not trust me, Isabel?"

She rose slowly to her feet. "I was Bella Cavallo."

"But you *knew* this moment was bound to come," said he.

"I knew that I could only give you the greatest happiness by letting you dream on—and on—and on—as long as possible."

"Did you not realize the price I would be compelled to pay, Isabel?" said the Judge. "Did you realize that I would awaken to a living hell?"

She stole near, watching his face.

"You told me you had never lived—and I gave you six months of happiness. Was any price too dear for what we have had?"

She knelt before him, winding her arms about his knees, while her eyes looked up into his with their old compelling magnetism.

"I am ready to leave you now—I only wished the best." Her voice broke and she sank down by the fire at the Judge's feet.

After a long time Bella stirred, then sat up, leaning on one arm. The Judge's face looked gray.

"Graves," she said. "Graves—forgive me!"

"There is no question of forgiveness between us," he said, raising her in his arms. "I wronged you before I ever met you—as every man in his fall wrongs the woman he is destined to love."

"And I wronged you—unknowingly," she returned. "Had I known!"

"We belong to each other, Isabel," he said solemnly, "for now and eternity."

"No—no! I am not fit," she cried. "It is bound to come out—your position—your future—you must let me go away. Graves, you must consider the world."

"If you had not been Bella Cavallo, you would not be the woman you are now, with the wondrous understanding. Your part will never be to stand aside and judge coldly, and you shall teach me to understand. We will work together for the living dead. We will help the men and women who are fighting their battles in the prisons—the suffering and the crushed and the sinning."

"You will resign—" She held her breath.

"I have meted out judgment long enough to my fellow beings, I with my weak humanity."

"You are a very great judge," she whispered, and his hand became moistened with her tears.



A BROKEN LUTE

By Clinton Scollard

I AM the thing round which the aureole
Of music hung, now like an empty bowl,
Reft of the living wine that was its soul!

Lo, I am as the rose that once was red,
Its fragrance gone, its glowing petals shed;
I am the body with the spirit fled!

And yet about me like an unseen flame
That raptured mystic worshipers acclaim,
Hovers a melody that none may name,

Impalpable save to anointed ears;
Yet he who hath true divination hears
Harmonies chorded with the swinging spheres;

For naught of loveliness can vanish quite,
But lingers near us, be it sound or sight,
One with the whole, one with the infinite!



DEFINITION of the truth—Something somehow discreditable to someone.

I WILL REPAY

By Will H. Spaulding

THE man was very tired. Now and then he rested, leaning heavily against a tree. Yet, though his body was numb with the torpor of physical exhaustion, his brain burned and throbbed with the fire of desire unappeased.

Since early morning he had been tramping the snowy forest, and in no moment of that time, until now, had his mind taken cognizance of his physical self. The cause of his condition was obvious. He, Jerry Cowle, was suffering from the fag end of his monthly drunk. Once every month he carried a fair-sized keg of whiskey from the settlement down on the Sound to his cabin. Then ensued a period when sun and sky and forest died out for him in a whirling chaos of joy and untrammelled orgy. For the time he dreamed in a Valhalla of his own creation, to awake as regularly in Hell. His one thought now was to get back to his cabin, where some of the blessed nectar might still remain. The reason for his being away was that he had taken a notion, born of no reason, to desert his cabin and liquor, and plunge, hatless and snowshoeless, into the forest. Straightaway, mile upon mile's end, he walked, buoyed up and borne on by that mighty energy of alcohol that eventually flickered and died like a candle set in water, leaving him sick and shaking at the end of a dozen-mile tangent.

Then, with his mind arousing his other self, and telling him that he was far from the fount of his libations, he wept. But never was there such a form of grief as this, for, even as the tears ran down his unwashed cheeks, he cursed himself, his useless life and all things

and everybody, far and near, that had contributed toward his predicament. Then began that exhausting journey homeward.

He had reached the top of a hill that overlooked his cabin of "cedar shakes" when he encountered a trail leading straight to his door. It was an odd, shapeless footprint, and Jerry recognized it at once as that of the Siwash Mute, a harmless old Indian that had roamed the hills along the ridge as far back as the oldest settler could recollect.

The Siwash Mute was adrift from his tribe: cut loose, and not allowed to anchor. This punishment was not because of the fact that he was deaf and dumb, but for the reason that he had remained always a child. Not having science to lay the blame upon, they had loaded it upon the simpleton himself. Therefore his life had depended upon the white man for many snows; the summers being a gluttonous dream.

He was allowed to dig his gnarled fingers through the garbage at the mine boarding house, and was not molested while he wrapped his feet in ragged ore sacks. His inability to distinguish between things mine and thine had led him into several predicaments; as when he donned the schoolmaster's Tuxedo suit and filled the pockets with blackberries. Following that, all doors, speaking literally, were closed to the Siwash Mute.

Jerry's wrath had abated somewhat as he neared home, due, no doubt, to the thoughts of the orgy soon to be renewed. Then came the trail pointing to his cabin and the possibilities of mischief.

The door was open, and from it there came an odor, delicious but so heavy as

to be portentous. A few more strides brought him to the threshold, and this is what he saw: Scattered in heaps over the slab table and on the floor was his scanty store of provisions, with the Siwash squatted in the wreck, busily wrapping his feet in sacks from which he had emptied the flour. On his back was one of Jerry's shirts.

But the keg! There it sat in the corner, on its block, with the spigot in it. The handle was turned wide open, however, and a drop of liquor hung on the edge. The floor beneath was soaked.

One quick look in the semi-darkness of the interior and then Jerry threw himself headlong across the room, whining like a puppy. His hands reached out convulsively before him, and on his face were carved the agonies of hunger and thirst and exhaustion; of hope dangled, and jerked away.

He pulled out the spigot and held the keg over his mouth. Not a drop came, so he hurled it through the window, sash and glass, after which he turned his attention to the indifferent savage.

"What do you mean? What do you mean by this?" he screamed, as he dragged the helpless wretch to his feet. "Wasn't you satisfied to fill yourself with my grub? Did you have to throw the rest away?"

As he spoke he alternately shook the Indian, and threw him from corner to corner of the room. He slammed him to the floor, only to drag him to his feet. Then, with his face within an inch of the other's, he bawled out curses in a voice that he thought might pierce the prenatal stricken ears.

"I'll fix you! I'll make such an example of you they'll tell ghost stories about you!" he continued, as he tore the purloined shirt from the Indian's back and the covering from his feet. "Now get out!" and he concluded by bundling the unfortunate through the doorway into the fast-gathering night; one of those cold, cold nights when the snow cries under foot, and the trees crackle drily in the omnipotent fetters of the frost. The wretch crawled away on all fours, and Jerry closed the door.

There was water in kegs and kettles

about the room, but instead of quenching his thirst from these the man threw himself stomach down on the floor, and lapped up a few drops of whiskey from a depression.

The taste maddened him, and when a few minutes later he saw the imbecile simpering at him through the broken window, he rushed out and dealt him a blow that dropped him like a thudded ox.

After gathering up all that was usable of his provisions, he made supper, and then rolled himself in his blankets. The physical and mental stress to which he had been subjected delayed his sleep for hours, and even while he lay staring into the blank darkness he muttered imprecations upon his despoiler.

The sun was shining when he awoke and threw a chunk of wood on the spent embers in the fireplace. When it had blazed up he rose and nailed a piece of canvas across the broken window. After attending to this he stepped outside to bring some fuel, and picked up several sticks, only to let them fall again. For there, nestling in the snow, was the naked object of the previous night's wrath. In a desperate quest for warmth the old man had crept close to where the heat from the fireplace drifted through a crack in the timbers, and there he sat, frozen to the heart, but with eyes wide open and staring up at the evil man with a pathetic, questioning gaze.

For an immeasurably infinite space of time two elemental emotions, fear and wrath, strove for the mastery of Jerry's mind. The sterner won.

"Well, you shrivelled old brute! You will wait around to knock me in the head, will you?" he taunted, as he towered, monstrous and cruel, over the huddle in the snow. He hoped to still his own conscience by bringing false imputations against the dead Siwash. "That's the time you drew something you wasn't looking for."

Late that night a loaded and stooping man plunged down a long hill to a river at the foot. He stepped carefully out on the shore ice, and dumped his burden into the murmuring water. The ice creaked and groaned under the sweep

of the eddy, as if to question the unloading of such a ghastly burden at such an unseemly hour. The man lighted his pipe and rested before returning to the cabin.

The next spring Jerry sold his lumber claim to capitalists in Tacoma, and went to San Diego. While there he collided with the law several times, ending by drugging and robbing a gambling companion. The officers cut off his exit by way of the railroad, so he "hired" a horse, and started over the mountains toward Arizona.

When the officers learned which way he was bound, they smiled. They had him. To them the deserts of Southern California and Arizona were like the bowls of an hourglass, with the neck at Yuma. Through this narrow neck the human sands must flow before they could spread out over the spaces beyond. So the officers sent a message to the town on the river and considered the matter closed.

Down in the Valley of the Colorado desert a young Indian girl sat before her hut of matted alamo branches, and crooned softly as she patted some clay into the form of a rude vase. She was Cocopah Charlie's wife. About her neck she wore a string of semi-precious stones which he had had cut and presented to her, for he loved his wife with the unostentatious love of primitive people. He was on a trip to Julian up in the mountains at the time of which we write; had gone there to sell some trinkets, and judging by previous trips would probably arrive home that evening.

The heat was intense, so much so that even the singing lizard that piped its shrill notes from the stone doorstep found it more congenial to waddle under its rostrum and take a nap. The girl was laying aside her work preparing to do likewise, when there came a clatter of hoofs on the road leading from the mountains. She was nervously fumbling the glittering necklace when a horseman dismounted and hurried to the door.

"Got any water?" he inquired abruptly. She directed him to the *olla* hanging in the window. It took several

gourdfuls to satisfy him, and as he drank he studied every detail of the cabin; focusing his eyes finally upon the string of brilliants around the girl's neck.

"Pretty," he ejaculated, pointing to them. The owner merely smiled. "Lots of work to make them," he ventured, and receiving no reply, went on, "This is the way I work," and went through the motions of dealing cards so facetiously that the girl smiled again. At this moment he ended his thirst-quenching by producing a bottle of whiskey and imbibing a long draught.

"I came from San Diego," he continued, garrulous with the liquor. "No sporting blood there, though. Headed for Yuma now. They say it's mean and hot there, but I'll add a touch of both when I get there."

There was something about the necklace that aroused Jerry's covetousness, comparative bauble though it was. Alcohol, the hypnotist, had snapped its fingers before its eyes, and lo, the simple stones were Cullinans and Kohinoors. He must have them. He poured out a little whiskey in the gourd and offered it to the girl, but she refused it. Again he tried, and yet again, only to be repulsed. His fury grew with each refusal. In his peculiar state of mind it seemed unreasonable to him that she should refuse the potion when it was proffered by the terrible Jerry Cowle.

She made an effort to get by him to the door, but he threw her back. Again she rushed, chattering wildly. This time he raised a great maul of a fist and struck her a glancing blow that reeled her round and round in a mad dance, to fall crumpling in a corner.

When Cocopah Charlie arrived at the corral gate that evening and turned his horse in, he was very, very tired. Even an Indian, a young Indian, will tire after riding all a previous night and most of a present day, with only a cat nap in the shade of a mesquite bush, beside a mosquito-infested spring. He thought it odd that the girl did not come out to greet him; nor was there an odor of stewing *frijoles* or fried meat as he approached the door. He stepped across the threshold and struck a match.

Every nook and corner of the little cabin had been ransacked. The remains of a rude feast were on the table, and in the center of it all sat an empty whiskey flask. But what was this disheveled heap in the corner, that, living and breathing, took no heed of his coming? It muttered foolishly. It was bereft of ornament. It was his wife.

As he looked, the thin mantle of civilization that had been thrown about him at the Indian school fell from his shoulders, and he stood the wild, free savage once more. He was the injured one; it was his to punish. In this case there would be no lawyers cracking verbal whips about the ears of cringing witnesses, nor drowsy jurors weighing the evidence in the scales of their own prejudice.

Within a half-hour after he had heard his wife's story he had condemned his man on the evidence, and was off along the Yuma trail to execute the sentence. He was mounted on a fresh horse that carried him along the rocky roads and sandy wash with equal ease; sailing along at a smooth, even gallop that knew no pause.

Out on the desert a campfire was dying down to embers. A man was stretched out beside it asleep. A little way off a horse showed shadowy against the stars. The camp was within a hundred feet of the road, but the Indian horseman appeared not to notice it as he rode abreast of it and straight on into the moonless night.

About a half-mile down the road, however, and at a point where it crossed a walled-in *arroyo* at right angles, he dismounted. The *arroyo* paralleled the road over which he had just come, and now, hidden within it, he walked his horse back to a point even with where his prey lay sleeping. There he left it and climbed, rifle in hand, up the sandy wall, to find himself about two hundred feet from the sleeper.

As he came over the brow of the hill, he stood upright for a second or two to reassure the other's tethered horse, and then, still carrying the rifle, crawled toward his quarry.

Jerry was sleeping soundly from the effects of the liquor and the long ride, and did not feel the rifle slip from under his head.

After securing the rifle, Cocopah Charlie stepped back and seated himself on Jerry's saddle where it lay in the sagebrush.

There, with the two rifles slung across his lap, he watched the long night through, as though his duty were to guard the sleeping man.

When Jerry Cowle awoke to the glory of the new day, he beheld the stolid Indian, and reached instinctively for his own weapon. It was gone, so he smiled drily.

"I guess you've got me," he called out. "So let's hear what you want."

"Get up, mister," the Indian ordered quietly.

Jerry had removed his shoes only upon retiring; so he cast off the blanket and slipped them on.

"Get some brush and build a big fire," was the Indian's next command.

Jerry considered the matter thus far as a case of hold-up, and took this last order as a preliminary to making breakfast for his unbidden guest.

After he had piled a considerable heap of sagebrush and greasewood, he made ready to light the fire, but was commanded to bring more.

"Get more. Make big fire—big fire."

So he heaped up the stack until it was as high as his head. Then came the order to fire it. He was stooping over to apply the match when a rifle spoke, and his horse fell crumpling in the sand.

"Say, what's that for?" he demanded, straightening up.

"Never mind; you build fire," ordered Cocopah Charlie as he swung a rifle around.

Jerry applied the match. When the flames were well under way, the captor called to him.

"Throw them things in," he ordered, motioning to the blankets and saddle kit. Jerry gathered them up and tossed them into the fire.

"This, too," and the Indian touched the saddle with his foot as he stepped back.

The fire was raging, and Jerry had difficulty in approaching near enough to toss it on. He was getting nervous now. The desert seemed so wide and dry, and help from God or man so far away.

"Now take off your shirt, hat and shoes," called the Indian.

Jerry hesitated; then took a gold watch from his pocket. "Here, take this and let me go, will you?" he entreated, at the same time tossing the watch toward his captor, who reached out a hand and batted it straight into the fire.

Once more he tried, this time with a roll of bills, but it was indignantly refused.

"Hurry up now, mister, throw them clothes in there," was the only recognition his pleading received.

There was no other course but to comply, and in a moment's time Jerry stood stripped to the waist and barefooted on the sandy floor of the desert.

The sun was already riding high, and beating fearfully upon the scene. The black smoke rose up and up in the desert doldrums until it faded away into the infinite depths of the polished sky.

Then for the first time the Indian spoke his mind. "You white man, you spoiled my home, and I'm going to make you an example to all you fellows. You *vamos* for Yuma."

Something in the words and their significance took Jerry back to the scene in the north woods when he had forced the naked Indian out into the night.

"You spoiled my home." The Siwash had spoiled his. The latter he had caused involuntarily to solve the Great Mystery; a penalty which was apparently about to be levied upon himself. There was one marked difference. Whereas he, a "superior type," had sent his culprit away with much bootless cursing and white-hot wrath, this "re-

cently lifted" savage was sending him out without any unnecessary berating or choleric display.

The above soliloquy passed through Jerry's mind in the small fraction of a second that elapsed between the Indian's first command and his next.

"Go now," and the rifle eyed him hungrily.

A hundred miles to Yuma! And a naked man to walk it! He must beg.

"There ain't no water."

"*Vamos* for Yuma."

"My God! A man can't live!" he sobbed.

"*Vamos* for Yuma," and a ball kicked the sand between his feet, causing him to move reluctantly down the road. He hurled a vile tirade over his shoulder at his tormentor, but a singing bullet caused him to cease and hurry on.

When he was well along the way, Cocopah Charlie took the rifle he had seized and slivered it stock and barrel over a rock. Then he led his faithful horse (he had not moved ten feet from where he had left him) up the bank, and in a moment was away. As soon as the horse had settled down into his accustomed swing, he leaned over, and wrapping his arms about the saddle horn, fell asleep.

Far out on the sandy waste was Jerry Cowle. The sun seared and scorched him, and strewed his path with fiery cinders. The trembling fingers of the heat metamorphosed every rock and bush along the way, and insulted his sense of corporal things with rude phantasmagorical shapes. Above him, a pair of birds, dark and silent and sinister, wheeled and circled high in the air. Sometimes they were in front of him, sometimes behind; but always there.

About noon he dropped into the deceitful shade of a heated cliff—and the two birds perched upon it and waited.



WHEN a woman complains that nobody understands her, she means that there is one exception.

A BALLADE OF OLD-TIME CAPTAINS

By Donn Byrne

WHO speaketh now of Tamerlane,
That emperor of Tartary?
Who speaketh now of Prester John,
Monarch of old-time Muscovy?
Cuchulain of the Irishry—
King Arthur of the grievous fray—
Great God! Who heareth word of them?
The winds have blown their dust away.

Never a word of those valiant ones,
The warrior captains of long ago;
Roland, the mighty paladin,
Who wrought the havoc of Roncevaux;
Duke Hannibal, or Scipio:
The Roman Julius, crowned with bay;
Pepin le Bref, or Courtmantel;
The winds have blown their dust away.

Never a word of the Lion Heart,
Who won the proud Castilian dame.
Never a word in a minstrel's mouth
Of the Grecian Alexander's fame.
Never the Trojan Hector's name
Is heard in ballad or virelay.
And Coriolanus, where is he?
The winds have blown their dust away.

L'ENVOI

The old Ecclesiast hath said
That all is vain, but well-a-day!
'Tis pity of those mighty ones—
The winds have blown their dust away.



MRS. WHITTAKER—What delightful manners your daughter has!
MRS. BILTER (*proudly*)—Yes. You see, she has been away from home so much!

WHITEMAIL

By Joyce Kilmer

SPIKE RITCHIE and I worked together on the *Daily News* from 1904 to 1907, and I always liked him. He was bright, hard-working, companionable and—I thought—perfectly straight. The other day he told me about a pretty crooked deal he was mixed up in. In fact, he told me that he was an unrepentant blackmailer and traitor. And I like him more than I ever did before.

When I got back to New York last week I looked over the pictures I had bought in Turkey and decided that I had the material for some Sunday stories. So I went around to the *News* office. The elevator man didn't know me—he had been on the job only two years—but he knew Spike.

"Mr. Ritchie is assistant Sunday editor now," he said. "But I don't think you'll find him in his office. Today's Thursday, so I guess he's in the composing room."

I made him let me off at the composing room and went in. There was Spike, telling the foreman that Matty had a glass arm, and making up the fashion page. He had grown much balder, but otherwise he had changed very little since I saw him six years before. He was the same little stoop-shouldered fellow, with the same rattail mustache and apparently the same cigar butt fixed in the corner of his mouth. Also, I discovered a few minutes, he had the same alcoholic breath.

"Hello, John!" he said. "Wait till I fix this up and I'll go out with you."

Soon we were comfortably seated at a table in Jimmy's bar. Jimmy, I was absurdly pleased to notice, remembered me and put a few drops of syrup in my Irish as if I were still a daily visitor.

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Spike looked at my pictures and told me to go ahead with the stories. Then—of course—we both grew reminiscent, and after the third drink and a little lunch came his confession. That is, if you'd call it a confession . . .

"You're not the only globe trotter," he said, lighting for the fourth time his amorphous cigar butt. "I went abroad two summers ago."

I expressed interest—without much enthusiasm, for I wanted to talk about Turkey.

"Yes," he said, "I had a little money saved up—I wasn't married then—and I was feeling pretty rotten, so I decided to knock off for a while. I traveled around the Continent for a few weeks and then I went to London. I wanted to see something of the country, so I bought a knapsack and made a leisurely walking tour of the Midland counties. And the result of that walking tour was a mighty queer experience—in fact, I may say a damn queer experience. And, in spite of the fact that you are bursting with the desire to tell me how you matched pennies with the Sultan and chucked the harem under its chin, I am now going to take up some minutes of the *News's* time in telling you about that experience. It has never been used as a news story, and it never will. But the villain—unless you call me the villain—is dead now, and I guess it wouldn't do any harm if you fixed it up with different names and made a fiction story out of it. Then if you sell it you can split with me fifty-fifty."

"Go ahead," I said.

Well (began Spike), I struck a little bit of a market town called Ashbourne

that I liked pretty well. So I got a room at an inn entertainingly called "The Green Man and Black's Head" and settled down for a week's stay. There were very few other guests, so the proprietor and I got rather friendly. Of course, like all Englishmen, he was surprised that I didn't know his cousin who was on a ranch in Texas and his nephew who was manager of a grocery store in Milwaukee.

"There's one of your fellow countrymen I can't say that I care for," he said one evening. "There was a Mr. James Rodney who came here from New York City, and we all wish we'd never seen him, sir. Perhaps you know him—he's a tall, thin gentleman with a sort of a mole over his right eye. He told us that he owned a big flour mill, but I don't know as he told the truth. Do you know a man of that name?"

I told him that I had never before heard of James Rodney, and by asking a few questions I heard a story that was unpleasant though not particularly strange. Two summers before that an American calling himself James Rodney had come to Ashbourne and stopped with Mrs. Clarke, the widow of the old vicar. She had very little money, and made a living by taking lodgers. He was on his way up north, and he had a two hours' wait between trains in Ashbourne. He took a walk through the town, stopped to get a drink of water at Mrs. Clarke's house, found that they took lodgers and by that night he had given up all idea of going north. He said that he liked Ashbourne and the Clarke cottage but, said the innkeeper, "what really attracted him was Mary Clarke. She was an amazingly pretty girl in those days, sir; in fact, she is still, though she's had a hard time."

It did not take Rodney long to make Mrs. Clarke and Mary believe that he was a person of some importance in New York. He seemed to have plenty of money, his manners were those of a gentleman, and he became popular in local society. In fact, everyone was pleased when, after a tempestuous courtship, Mary and he were married in the beautiful old parish church.

Mary thought that her husband would take her to America at once, but he said that he would prefer to see a little more of Europe. So they went to Switzerland for a couple of weeks and then returned to Mrs. Clarke's cottage. Rodney had received a cable from New York, he said. He must go back to his mill for a little while. It was an urgent matter—he must get the boat sailing from Liverpool on the very next day. He would send a letter by every mail and within a month he would come back for his wife and her mother.

Of course you have guessed what happened. James Rodney, or whatever his real name was, never came back. He did not write and, what is more important, he did not send any money. Letters sent to James Rodney, the Rodney Flour and Grain Company, 13 West Ninety-eighth Street, New York City, U. S. A., were returned by the Dead Letter Office. His name did not appear on the passenger list of the steamer on which he said he intended to sail. For a while Mrs. Clarke and Mary thought that he had met with some fatal accident, but after a friend of theirs, visiting America, had found that no such concern as the Rodney Flour and Grain Company had ever existed and that there were no mills on Ninety-eighth Street, they knew that they had been cruelly deceived. In the course of time Mary had a baby, a very nice baby. It was a little boy, as pretty as Mary herself and resembling her strikingly. In only one respect he resembled his father—there was a small but unmistakable mole over his right eye.

This story interested me very much, and I took the liberty of calling on Mrs. Clarke the next day, on the pretense of looking for lodgings. Indeed, it became more than a pretext, for Mrs. Clarke was such a charming old gentlewoman and the cottage and Mary—it was hard for me to call her Mrs. Rodney—so attractive that I took a room and stayed for three weeks.

Of course I got from them all that they knew about the mysterious James Rodney, and that was little more than the innkeeper had told me. But just before

I left Mrs. Rodney gave me a little kodak picture of her husband and herself, taken by her mother on the porch of the cottage.

I went back to America with a fixed determination to find this Rodney person, smash his face and make him send every cent that he possessed back to Ashbourne. You see, I knew the suffering that his little game had inflicted on Mary and her mother and I was pretty sore about it. I confess I didn't have much hope of finding the fellow, but I was going to make a good try at it, anyway. Well, I didn't have to try very hard. I never was much good at this suspense business, so I'll spring my sensation on you right away. James Rodney was Andrew Judd. Yes—don't spill your whiskey—Andrew Judd, president of the Judd Iron Works, philanthropist and reformer.

Two days after I got back, Boss Rider sent me out to interview Judd for the Sunday edition. Judd had just invented a very fancy sort of model tenement with a gymnasium and swimming tank on every floor. In order to understand just what improvements were needed in the housing of the poor he had spent two days in a tenement house on the lower East Side, and was very eager to talk about it. As soon as I saw him I recognized him, and you can readily understand that my first desire was for a large encouraging draught of the beverage known as whiskey. And, by the way, ring that bell, will you, Jimmy? Two more, please, and a little lunch with it.

Well, of course I thought right away just what you thought—here is one hell of a big story! In spite of the fact that we were running this page interview in the Sunday, the *News* had no particular friendship for Judd. In fact, we were going to oppose him in the fall. He was going to run for Mayor on some crazy reform ticket, and we, of course, were organization Democrat.

I had all the facts and there was plenty of time to get the story in next morning's paper. All I had to do was to flash that little kodak picture (which I always carried with me) on Judd, tell

him what I knew of his little European jaunt and let him throw me out of the office. Then back to the *News*, to grab all the space I wanted for the biggest sensation that the paper ever had. Think what a story like that would mean to me, an absolutely exclusive story with a picture to prove it! I saw myself getting a three-hundred-dollar bonus and a regular job at about eighty a week. Then, too, you know that I'm not talking sentiment when I say that I was—have always been—loyal to the *News*. You were long enough in the game to find out what a newspaper man's loyalty is—how his first idea when anything big happens is always to hammer it out on his machine and get it in before the first edition goes to press.

But I had sense enough to hold on to myself for a while. I shook hands with Judd—I guess I stared pretty hard at that moleover his right eye—and I went ahead with the interview as had been arranged. Judd was feeling expansive that day, and he really knew how to talk. He gave me a great little story, full of human interest, and with a lot of new stuff in it, but all the while I was listening to him I was thinking harder than I ever thought before. There were three different plans in my mind—I couldn't, to save my life, think just what I ought to do. After a while Judd felt that he'd given me all I needed and he stopped talking.

"Mr. Judd," I said, almost involuntarily, "when were you married?"

"Why, my dear boy, I don't see what that has to do with what we've been talking about; but I was married five years ago. In St. Marmaduke's Church, of which I am junior warden, if you wish the full particulars. My wife was Miss Emily Lindsay, and here is a picture of her."

He took from his desk a framed photograph of a very lovely woman with a little girl on her lap.

"I see," I said, vaguely. "And when was it that you went abroad?"

"Well, I really don't think that the public will be interested in matters like this," he said, "but I have been abroad several times. Two years ago I spent

the summer in England, and then made a somewhat extensive tour of Germany. But I think that I must ask you to excuse me now. I've given you all you need, have I not? Oh, yes!" he added, "I suppose you will want a picture of me. I think I have some in my desk drawer. I'll look and see."

"No," I said, in a voice which seemed strange to me. "I've got a picture already."

His back was turned to me, and he was rummaging in his desk. "But I'm afraid that's been used before. I think I can find some new ones for you."

"This picture has never been used before," I said. "It was taken two years ago in Ashbourne."

At the word "Ashbourne" he turned suddenly and looked at the little square of gray cardboard in my hands. Then he grew very white and stood perfectly still.

For a minute neither of us spoke.

Then, with a self-control for which I could not help admiring him, he pushed his chair to the desk, sat down, turned his back to me and wrote.

I heard the rip of torn paper. He whirled his chair and stretched out his hands to me. In his left hand was an oblong of green paper with his name written in the lower right hand corner. His right hand was empty.

"Here is a blank cheque, which I have signed," he said. "Give me the photograph, please."

I admit I hesitated for a moment. I am not so devoted to my job that I would hate an independent fortune. But I didn't hesitate long.

It was a ridiculously theatrical thing to do, but I took the cheque, tore it into four pieces, and dropped them on the blotter on his desk.

"To hell with your cheque!" I said, in a quiet conversational tone of voice. "You'll need that money when you start defending yourself against the charge of bigamy."

Judd deliberately lit a cigar and sat looking at me.

"So you've got an interesting item for tomorrow's paper, have you?" he said. "But what's the idea? Just what

do you gain by attacking me? That little picture is interesting, but it proves absolutely nothing."

I rose to go. "In the first place," I said, with my hand on the doorknob, "I know the girl whom you illegally married two years ago, and the *News* will bring her over here—with her child. We will gain two things—we will be purveyors of a very interesting story and we will bring punishment on a damned hypocrite."

He was perfectly calm. "I see your first point," he answered reflectively. "You can publish a very sensational story—there is no doubt of that. But I doubt very much your ability to substantiate your charge, and I fail to see why you are so bitterly enraged at me. There must be some motive. . . . I think I see. Yes, I think I see. But what earthly good will it do the young woman to drag her name into this scandal? You cannot carry out your amiable design of ruining me without ruining also two women."

"All right," I said, "I'll tell you what I'll do. You've got to square yourself, and I'll keep quiet about this business. But you've got to square yourself."

"Just what do you mean by 'square myself'?" he said.

"James Rodney must die," I almost shouted.

"My God!" he exclaimed. "Do you want me to kill myself?"

"You must kill James Rodney," I said. "See here, Mary Clarke has never heard of Andrew Judd. What you've got to do is to write her a letter signing your own name, saying that James Rodney was Tom Smith, or John Jones, or anything you like. Anyway, you must say that he was a friend of yours and that he is dead. Say that he confessed to you on his deathbed that he had married and deserted a girl named Mary Clarke in Ashbourne, England, and that he asked you to notify her of his death and to send her all his money."

"I'll do it," he said. "I'll do it this afternoon. I'll send her ten thousand dollars—fifty thousand dollars—all the money you say."

"You certainly will do it today," I

said, "for I'm going to stick around and watch you do it. You will write the letter at my dictation and I will mail it myself. But as to the money that you are sending, you've got the wrong idea. You will send Miss Clarke enough money to buy that little cottage so that they won't have to earn the rent by taking lodgers and enough to pay for a trip abroad for her and her mother. They need a little holiday after the trouble you got them into, you filthy cad. Then you must add enough to send your son through school and through the university. I guess we'll put it at twenty thousand dollars—that's letting you off pretty cheap, and I don't want to burden them with a lot of your dirty money. And you must send the money in English bank-notes."

"I suppose you know," Mr. Judd said to me, as I left him late that afternoon, "that what you are doing is blackmail."

"Today," I answered, "I am, in suppressing this story, breaking the great

commandment of the newspaper business—violating a code of ethics which you could not possibly understand. I am a traitor to the *News* and to my profession. And after that I don't mind a little blackmail."

Jimmy had taken away our empty glasses and was ostentatiously wiping the table with a gray napkin. Spike looked at his watch and got up to go. As we walked down the street I turned to him and said: "But didn't Mary What-you-may-call-her ever get wise? When Judd died last year she must have seen his picture in some English paper and known that he was the fellow that fooled her. I should think she'd sue his estate and get good money."

"Sure she got wise," said Spike. "But she wouldn't start anything now. She's perfectly comfortable, I guess."

"What is she doing?" I asked.

"Why," said Spike, lighting his cigar butt for the ninth time, "she's married to the assistant Sunday editor of the *Daily News*."



SKYSCRAPERS

By Horace Holley

A FOREST of strange palms
 That stir not, nor sway in the wind,
 Nor nod sleepy at evening, nor reach to nestling birds
 A warm and comfortable mossy bough;
 Strange giant palms
 Rigid and sternly fixed in the purple sunset.
 One day the loud vexed ocean
 Will drive a furious tempest from the east
 To lash your stony trunks,
 To tear your earth-devouring roots
 And shake upon a shore deserted
 This terrible fruit of flame long petrified.



IT is a man's world because women are in it.

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PERTINENT AND IMPERTINENT

By Owen Hatteras

(As submitted to the magazine.)

HELEN DAMEREL and Goddard sought a quiet café. Soon they were in a quaint private dining room overlooking the sensuous waters of the Seine. Helen was very seductive that evening. Her filmy satin gown half revealed and half suggested the subtle contour of her body. Her uncovered shoulders glistened in the roseate light of the candelabrum. Her fine features were accentuated by delicate pencilings about her eyes and the merest touch of carmine applied to her cheeks.

A dapper little short-legged waiter tripped in and waited.

"Two Crème d'Yvettes," Goddard ordered.

"Helen," he breathed passionately, "say that you love me and that you will marry me!"

There was a silence. The amorous strains of the "Kreutzer Sonata" were wafted to them. "I wish to God I had never seen you!" Goddard added despairingly.

"I don't, my beloved," the girl returned, her eyes in his.

"You—you mean that?" Goddard took the cigarette from his lips and, rising, came quickly to where she sat. He put his arms about her and drew her slowly up to him until their lips met. She did not resist him now. When he put his arm about her she surrendered gladly, hungrily, to his embrace, and in that kiss she betrothed him her life.

"Darling!" he breathed close against her young flushed face.

Outside the wind sighed through the naked trees; and in the distance an owl called softly to its mate.

(As pasteurized by the editor.)

H—EN D—EREL and G—dard sought a restaurant. Soon they were in the main dining room overlooking the silent waters of the Seine. H—en was very attractive that evening. Her heavy cashmere dress fitted high about her throat, and its numerous folds hung loosely about her. Her fine features were accentuated by her natural color.

* * *

A dapper little short-limbed waiter tripped in and waited.

"Two French Vichys," G—dard ordered.

"Miss D—erel," he breathed, "say that you will marry me and that you love me!"

There was a silence. The solemn strains of Handel's "Largo" were wafted to them. "I wish to Heaven I had never seen you," G—dard added despairingly.

"I don't, Mr. G—dard," the girl returned, her eyes downcast.

"You—you mean that?" G—dard took the toothpick from his lips and, rising, came quickly to where she sat.

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* * *

"H—en!" he breathed.

Outside the wind sighed through the trees; and in the distance an owl called softly.

THE SHADOW IN THE ROSE GARDEN

By D. H. Lawrence

A RATHER small young man sat by the window of a pretty seaside cottage trying to persuade himself that he was reading the newspaper. It was about half past eight. Outside, the "glory" roses hung in the morning sunshine like little bowls of fire tipped up. The young man looked at the table, then at the clock, then at his own big silver watch. An air of resignation came onto his face. He rose and reflected on the miserable oil paintings that hung on the walls of the room, evidently getting some satisfaction out of "The Stag at Bay," which held him for a few moments. He tried the lid of the piano, and found it locked. He caught sight of his own face in a little mirror, pulled his brown mustache, and an alert interest sprang into his eyes. He was not ill-favored. He twisted his mustache. His figure was rather small, but alert and vigorous. As he turned from the mirror a look of self-commiseration mingled with the satisfaction he had derived from the sight of himself.

In a state of self-suppression, he went through into the garden. His jacket, however, did not look dejected. It had a smart and self-confident air, sitting upon a healthy body. He contemplated the Tree of Heaven that flourished by the lawn, but derived no nourishment therefrom. There was more promise in a crooked apple tree covered with brown-red fruit. Glancing round guiltily, he broke off an apple and, with his back to the house, took a clean, sharp bite. To his surprise the fruit was sweet. He took another. Then again he turned hastily to survey the bedroom windows overlooking the garden. He started, seeing a woman's figure, but

it was only his wife. She was gazing across to the sea, apparently ignorant of him.

For a moment or two he looked at her wistfully and doubtfully. She was a good-looking woman who seemed older than he, rather pale, but healthy, her face yearning. Her rich auburn hair was heaped in folds on her forehead. She looked shut off from him and his world, gazing away to the sea. It irked her husband that she should continue to be in ignorance of him, so he pulled poppy fruits and threw them at the window. She started, glanced at him with a mild smile and looked away again. Then almost immediately she left the window. He went indoors to meet her. She had a fine carriage, very proud, and wore a dress of soft white muslin.

"I've been waiting for hours," he said.

"For me or for breakfast?" she said lightly. "You know we said nine o'clock. I should have thought you could have slept longer after the journey."

"You know I'm always up at five, and I couldn't stop in bed after six. You might as well be in pit as in bed, on a morning like this."

"If I were you," she said, "I should forget the pit while we're here."

She moved about examining the room, looking with a faint twitch of contempt at the ornaments under glass covers. He, planted on the hearthrug, watched her rather uneasily, and entirely indulgent. Evidently she found fault with their apartments.

"Come," she said, taking his arm, "let us go into the garden whilst Mrs. Coates lays the table. I can hear her setting the tray."

"I hope she'll be quick about it," he said, pulling his mustache.

She gave a short laugh, and leaned on his arm as they went. He had lighted a pipe.

Mrs. Coates, the desired, entered the room as they went down the steps. The delightful, erect old lady hastened to the window for a good view of her lodgers. Her china-blue eyes were bright as she watched the young couple go down the path, he walking proudly in an easy, masculine fashion, because his wife was on his arm. The landlady began talking to herself in a soft Yorkshire accent.

"Just of a height they are, just. She wouldn't ha' married a man less than herself in stature, I think, though he's not her equal in wits."

Here her granddaughter came in, setting a tray on the table. The girl went to the old woman's side.

"He's been eating the apples, gran'," she said.

"Has he, my pet? Well, if he's happy, why not?"

"I should ha' thought he'd want 'em more if he wasn't happy," said the child, in the tone of a wisacre.

Outside, the young, well-favored man listened with gratification to the chink of the teacups. At last, with a sigh of relief, he sat down to breakfast. After he had eaten for some time, he rested a moment, and said:

"Do you think it's any better place than Bridlington?"

"I do," she said, "infinitely. Besides, I didn't come for that, either."

"What for, then?"

"You know I lived here for two years."

He ate reflectively.

"As a rule," he said, "there's nothing so miserable as going back to places where you used to live."

She became very silent, and then, stealthily, put out a feeler.

"And do you think I'm going to be miserable?" she asked.

He laughed comfortably, putting the marmalade thick on his bread.

"I hope not," he said.

She again took no notice of him.

"Don't talk about me in the village,

Frank," she said casually. "Don't say who I am, or that I used to live here. I don't want them bothering me."

"Why?"

"Why? Can't you understand why?"

"Yes—only—I wondered why you came at all."

"To see the place, not the people."

He was satisfied, taking her for granted, like the sky above.

"Women," she said, "are different from men. I don't know why I wanted to come so badly—but I did."

She helped him to another cup of coffee, solicitously.

"Only," she resumed, "don't talk about me in the village." She laughed prettily. "They'd be sure to tell you what a little flirt I was." And she moved the crumbs on the cloth with her fingertip.

He looked at her as he drank his coffee, sucked his mustache, and putting down his cup, smiled to himself.

"I'll bet you were," he said comfortably.

She looked, with a little guiltiness that flattered him, down at the tablecloth.

"Well," she said, subdued, "you won't give me away, who I am, will you?"

"No," he said, laughing, "I won't give you away; I want to keep you myself."

He was pleased with himself, because of this speech.

She jerked up her head, changing the subject, and said, rather hard and yet forcing the tone of a caress:

"I must see Mrs. Coates this morning, and I've several little things to do. So you go into the bay, will you, and we'll have dinner at one; then I'll show you where I used to live—shall I?"

"But you can't be talking with Mrs. Coates for all morning," he said.

"Oh, well—then I've some letters to write, and I must get that mark out of my skirt. What a blessing I brought some benzine!"

He perceived that she wanted to be rid of him, so when she went upstairs he took his hat and lounged out onto the cliffs.

Presently she, too, came out. She

wore a hat with roses, and a long lace scarf hung over her white dress. Rather nervously, she put up her sunshade, and her face was half hidden in its colored shadow. She went along the narrow track of flagstones that were worn hollow by the feet of the fishermen. She seemed to be avoiding her surroundings, as if she remained safe in the little obscurity of her parabol.

She passed the church, and went down the lane till she came to a high wall by the wayside. Under this she went slowly, stopping at length by an open doorway, which shone like a picture of light in the dark wall. There in the magic beyond the doorway patterns of shadow lay on the sunny court, on the blue and white pebbles of its paving, while a green lawn glowed beyond, where a bay tree glittered at the edges. She tiptoed timidly into the courtyard, glancing at the house that stood in shadow. The uncurtained windows looked black and soulless. The kitchen door stood open. Irresolutely she took a step forward, and forward, leaning, yearning, toward the garden beyond.

She had almost gained the corner of the house when a heavy step came crunching through the trees. A gardener appeared before her. He held a wicker tray on which were rolling great dark red gooseberries, overripe. He moved slowly.

"The garden isn't open today," he said quietly to the attractive woman, who was poised for retreat.

For a moment she was silent with surprise. How should it be public at all?

"When is it open?" she asked, quick-witted.

"The Rector lets visitors in on all days but Sundays and Tuesdays."

She stood still, reflecting. How strange to think of the Rector opening his garden to the public!

"But everybody will be at church?" she said, tentatively, to the man.

He moved, and the big gooseberries rolled.

"The Rector lives at the new rectory," he said.

The two stood still. He did not like

to ask her to go. At last she turned to him with a sweet smile.

"Might I have *one* peep at the roses?" she coaxed, with pretty willfulness.

"I don't suppose it would matter," he said, moving aside. "You won't stop long. . . ."

She moved forward, forgetting the gardener in a moment. Her face became strained, her movements eager. Glancing round, she saw all the windows giving onto the lawn were curtainless and dark. The house had a sterile appearance, as if it were still used but not inhabited. A shadow seemed to go over her. She went across the lawn toward the garden, through an arch of crimson ramblers, as through a gate of fire. There beyond lay the soft blue sea within the bay, misty with morning, and the furthest headland of black rock jutted dimly out between blue and blue of the sky and water. Her face began to shine with a transfiguration. At her feet the garden fell steeply, all a confusion of flowers, and away below was the darkness of treetops covering the beck.

She turned to the garden that shone with sunny flowers around her. She knew the little corner where was the seat beneath the yew tree. Then there was the terrace where was a great bed of flowers, and from this two paths went down, one at each side of the garden. She put down her sunshade and walked slowly, looking at the many flowers. All around were rose bushes, big banks of roses, then roses hanging and tumbling from pillars, then standard roses. In the middle were beds of other flowers. If she lifted her head, the sea was uplifted beyond, and the cape.

Slowly she went down one path, lingering, like one who has gone back into the past. Suddenly she was touching some heavy crimson roses that were soft as velvet, touching them thoughtfully, without knowing, as a mother sometimes fondles the head of her child. She leaned slightly forward to catch the scent. Then she wandered on in abstraction. Sometimes a flame-colored, scentless rose would hold her arrested. She stood gazing at it as if she could not

understand it. Again the same softness of intimacy came over her, as she stood before a tumbling heap of pink petals. Then she wondered over the white rose, that was greenish, like ice, in the center. So, slowly, like a white, dreamy butterfly, she drifted down the path, coming at last to a tiny terrace all full of roses. They seemed to hold the place, like a sunny, gay throng. She was shy of them, they were so many and so bright. They seemed to be talking and laughing. She felt herself in a strange crowd. But it exhilarated her. She flushed slightly with excitement. The air was pure scent.

Hastily, she went to a little seat among the white roses, and sat down. Her scarlet sunshade made a hard note of color. She sat quite still, feeling her own existence lapse. She was no more than a rose, a rose that was going to fall, slip its white petals. A little fly suddenly dropped onto her knee, on her white dress. She saw it, as if it had fallen on a rose. She was not herself.

Then she started violently as a shadow crossed her and something moved. It was a man who had come in slippers, unheard. He wore a linen coat. Everything vanished; the sunshine became common, the trees hard; she was only afraid of being questioned. He came forward. She rose. Then, seeing him, the use went from her and she sank on the seat again.

He was a young man somewhat military in his appearance, but growing stout. His black hair was brushed smooth and bright, his mustache was waxed. But there was something rambling about his gait. She looked up, blanched to the lips with fear, and saw his eyes. They were black and stared without seeing. But he was coming to her.

He made a sharp, jerky salute, and sat down beside her on the seat. He moved on the bench, shifted his feet in a shuffling fashion, saying:

"I—I don't disturb you—do I?"

She was paralyzed with fear and shock. He was scrupulously dressed in dark clothes and a linen coat. Not seeing his face, some of her fear went, and

a certain warmth, a wild hope came up in her. She lost her head for a moment, seeing his hands, with a ring she knew so well on the little finger, resting on his thighs. But even their curious half-grasping look frightened her. She was utterly lost to herself.

"May I smoke?" he asked suddenly, his hand going with a dart to his pocket.

"Certainly," she murmured, ineffectively, for he was not listening. Perhaps he recognized her and was only awkward. A flash went through her. She began to blush.

"I haven't got any tobacco," he said.

But she was not listening. The same old roused, delicious feeling came over her, from contact with him.

"I always smoke John Cotton," he said, "and I don't have much of it, because it's expensive—and you know I'm not very well off."

"No," she said, and her heart went cold, her soul fell back from him. He moved, made a sharp salute and started up, and went away eagerly. She sat motionless with fear. And yet she loved him, the shape of his head, of his hands. But there was a curious stiffness about him that horrified her. Suddenly he came back again, his hand in his jacket pocket.

"Do you mind if I smoke?" he said absorbedly. "I'm going to see my solicitor."

He sat down beside her again, rapidly filling a pipe. She watched his hands with the beautiful long fingers. They had always been inclined to tremble slightly. It had surprised her, long ago, in such a strong, healthy man. Now they moved rapidly and inaccurately, and the tobacco hung raggedly out of the pipe.

"I have legal affairs to attend to. Legal affairs are always so uncertain. I have to tell my solicitor exactly, exactly what I want, and then it turns out quite the opposite. . . ."

He was mad. Her heart went still, and the world seemed to spin around her. Then a great tenderness filled her heart. He dropped his pipe. She picked it up and put it in his hand, as if he were a child. The contact with

him made her tremble: he was the man she had loved, and still loved. Suddenly he started up, and her heart seemed to explode in her breast.

"I must go at once," he said, in a flutter of excitement; "the owl is coming." Then he added, confidentially: "His name isn't really the owl, but I call him that. . . . I suppose my solicitor will have come."

She rose, too. He stood before her, handsomely made and in perfect health, a man of about thirty. She had been so overweeningly proud of him.

"Won't you come to supper?" he said. She was looking at his splendid physique which she had loved so much, which roused in her some of the same passion, and at the same time made her shrink with horror. He took her hand nervelessly, dropping it almost immediately.

A man approached, watchful.

"The garden isn't open this morning," he said.

He went to the seat and picked up the tobacco pouch left lying there.

"Don't leave your tobacco, sir," he said, taking it to the gentleman in the linen coat.

"I have just been giving the lady a little," the latter said politely.

The woman turned and walked swiftly, blindly, between the sunny roses, out from the garden, past the house with the blank, dark windows, through the sea-pebbled courtyard to the street. Set and mechanical, she went forward without hesitating, not knowing whither. Directly she came to the house she went upstairs, took off her hat and sat down on the bed. It was as if her brain had been torn in two, so that she was not an entity that could think and feel, and yet her state was unbearable. She sat with clenched fists staring across at the window, where an ivy spray waved monotonously, up and down, up and down. There was some of the uncanny luminousness of the sunlit sea in the air. She sat perfectly still, afraid to move from her set position.

After a time she heard the hard tread of her husband on the floor below, and, without herself changing, she began to

listen. She heard his rather disconsolate footsteps go out again, then his voice speaking, answering, growing cheery, and his solid tread drawing near.

He entered, ruddy, rather pleased, an air of complacency about his alert, sturdy figure. She moved stiffly. He faltered in his approach.

"What's the matter?" he asked, a tinge of impatience in his voice. "Aren't you feeling well?"

This was torture to her.

"Quite," she replied.

His brown eyes became slightly angry.

"What is the matter?" he said.

"Nothing."

He took a few strides, and stood sturdily looking out of the window.

"Have you run up against anybody?" he asked.

"Nobody who knew me."

His hands began to twitch. He could not bear it that she was no more sensible to him than if he did not exist. Turning suddenly on her, he asked:

"Something has upset you, hasn't it?"

She flinched, but answered:

"No; why?"

His anger rose, filling the veins in his throat.

"It seems like it," he said, making an effort not to show his anger, because there seemed no reason for it. He went away downstairs. She sat still on the bed, and hated him, amongst her other feelings. The time went by. She could smell the dinner being served, the smoke of her husband's pipe from the garden. Why couldn't they leave her alone? There was a tinkle of the bell. She heard him come indoors. And then he mounted the stairs again. At every step her heart swelled hot in her. He opened the door.

"Dinner is on the table," he said.

How she hated him and his dinners! She was paralyzed, and did not want to move. But she rose stiffly and went down. She could neither eat nor speak during the meal, and she answered her husband's anxiety with the cold answer that nothing was the matter. He became silent with rage. As soon as it was possible, she went upstairs again,

and locked the bedroom door. He went with his pipe into the garden. All his accumulated rage against her filled and blackened his heart. Though he had not known it, he had never really had her: she had never loved him and given herself up to him. This had baffled him. But he was only a laboring electrician in the mine; she was superior to him. And he had always given way to her. Gradually this had hurt his self-respect, because she did not love him. And now all his rage came up against her.

He turned suddenly and went indoors. The third time she heard him mounting the stairs. Her heart stood still. He turned the latch and pushed the door—it was locked. He tried it again, harder. Her heart was standing still.

"Have you fastened the door?" he asked, quietly, because of the landlady.

"Yes. Wait a minute."

She rose and turned the lock, afraid he would burst it. She felt guilty toward him, because she did not love him. He entered, his pipe between his teeth, and she returned to her old position on the bed. He closed the door and stood with his back to it.

"What's the matter?" he asked ominously.

She hated him. She hated the way he spoke, lifting his lips from his teeth, which clenched the pipe.

"Can't you leave me alone?" she replied, averting her face from him. He looked at her quickly, sideways, in a dangerous fashion. Then he seemed coolly to consider for a moment.

"There's something up with you, isn't there?" he asked, challenging her to tell a lie. If she did lie, he would turn his back on her. After all, he was honest. She was afraid.

"Yes," she said; "but that's no reason why you should torment me, is it?"

"I want to know what it is."

"Why should you?"

Something snapped. He started and caught his pipe as it fell from his mouth. Then he pushed forward the bitten-off mouthpiece with his tongue, took it from his lips and looked at it. Then he put out his pipe. After which he raised his head.

"I want to know," he said.

Neither looked at the other. She knew he was determined. His heart was pounding heavily. She hated him; he seemed petty to her. Suddenly she lifted her head in pride and turned on him.

"What right have you to know?" she asked.

He looked at her. She felt a pang of pity for his tortured eyes of a stubborn animal. But her heart hardened swiftly. She was wrong to him; she had never loved him. She did not love him now.

Suddenly she lifted her head again swiftly, like a thing that tries to get free. She wanted to be free of it. It was not he so much, but it, something she had put on herself, that bound her so horribly. And having put the bond on herself, it was hardest to take it off. But now she hated everything and felt destructive. He stood with his back to the door. She looked at him. Her eyes were cold and hostile. His workman's hands spread on the panels of the door behind him.

"You know I used to live here?" she began, as if willfully to wound him. He braced himself against her and nodded.

"Well, I was companion to Miss Birch, of Torril Hall—she and the Rector had been friends since they were children, and she was awfully fond of Oswald. He was the Rector's son, and his mother had died when he was little."

The husband looked at his wife. She was squatted in her white dress on the bed, carefully folding and refolding the hem of her skirt. Her voice was full of hostility.

"He was an officer—a sub-lieutenant—then he quarreled fearfully with his colonel, who was a beast, and he came out of the army. At any rate"—she plucked at her skirt hem; her husband stood motionless, watching the wedding ring on her hand and her fine profile—"he was awfully fond of me, and I was of him—awfully. . . ."

"How old was he?" asked the husband.

"When? When I first knew him or when he went away?"

"When you first knew him."

"When I first knew him, he was twenty-seven; now—he's thirty-one—nearly thirty-two—because I'm twenty-nine, and he's nearly three years older—"

She lifted her head and looked at the opposite wall.

"Well, get on," said her husband.

She hardened herself as if from a blow, and said callously:

"We were as good as engaged for nearly a year, though nobody knew—at least—they talked—but—it wasn't open. Then he went away—"

"Chucked you?" said the husband brutally, hating her for having been thrown over by another man. Her heart rose wildly in resentment. Then, "Yes," she said, to anger him. He shifted from one foot to the other, giving a "ph!" of rage. There was silence for a time.

"Then," she resumed, her pain giving a mocking note to her words, "he suddenly went out to fight in Tripoli; and almost the very day I first met you I heard from Miss Birch he'd got dysentery—and two months after, that he was dead—"

"He shouldn't ha' gone, then," said the husband, almost sympathetic now.

"He wouldn't if it hadn't been for me," she said.

"Why?" he asked angrily.

But she paid no heed to the question. Neither spoke for a time.

"So you've been looking at your old courting places!" he said angrily. "That was what you wanted to go out by yourself for this morning."

Still she did not answer him anything. He went away from the door to the window. A yellowish dimness was coming over the sky. There was going to be a storm. He stood with hands

behind him, his back to her. She looked at him. His hands looked gross to her, the back of his head paltry.

At length, almost against his will, he turned round, asking suddenly:

"And how far did it go?"

"Did what go?" she replied coldly.

"Between you and him?"

She lifted her head, averting her face from him.

"I loved him, whatever I did," she answered enigmatically.

He stood looking at her, trying to get a real answer.

"You mean—"

He seemed to shrink, awaiting her answer.

"Yes."

Very slowly, he lifted his open hand and laid it on the dressing table to steady himself. He began to speak, but got nothing out. Then, hurt into simplicity, he said:

"You should have told me."

It was this she felt so hard to accept. She closed her mouth and held herself shut from him. Then a queer, pathetic look came into her face, as if she were yielding herself up to pain.

"And then today," she went on, confessing to something greater than he, "I saw him in the rose garden—and he is out of his mind—"

There was silence in the room. He felt the suffering was greater than he was. It was queer, to him, to find himself submerged.

"In what way?" he asked.

"I don't think he knew me; he has a keeper to—look after him."

Her husband watched her. She was pale and silenced. And he had nothing to do with her. He lifted himself, trying to ease himself, and sighed.

"We can't stop here then," he said.



THE only legitimate ad. for a billboard is one extolling the merits of an eye salve.

A MARCH MOOD

By Louis Untermeyer

HERE'S Spring come again—the old harlot—
Back to her haunts again;
And the blood of the world runs scarlet,
With the harsh desire, the shattering pain.
Yet—here are the same old tricks—
The smile and the sidelong glances;
The stale and hackneyed romances;
The magics that do not mix . . .
The same old stock in trade—
The blushes and airs of a maid
That flies from a bashful pursuer,
While she herself is the wooer
That will be obeyed.

Tripping the tawdry measure,
Singing her worn-out song,
She accosts you with tales of her treasure—
Glib patter of love and of pleasure—
And oh, you are carried along.

But look at the paint on her cheeks,
It is thick with thousands of years;
And hark to her voice as she speaks,
It is trembling with age—not her tears.
She is old, lad, believe, she is old—
She is hardened and bitter and cold;
A wanton that has no more fire in her soul
Than a burnt bit of coal;
A vampire that sends the blood coursing, and then
Sucks out the spirits of men. . . .

But the fool is still blandished and blinded,
And the poet still babbles of bliss;
And even the wise and the sensible-minded
Are bewitched by her kiss.
Yet though she is old as the winter,
And her insolent beauty is shed,
They will clasp her and rhyme her and tint her
Till the last of her lovers are dead.

THE PERSECUTIONS OF BEAUTY

By Richard Le Gallienne

ALL religions have periods in their history which are looked back to with retrospective fear and trembling as eras of persecution, and each religion has its own book of martyrs. The religion of beauty is no exception. Far from it. For most other religions, however they may have differed among themselves, have agreed in fearing beauty, and even in Greece there were stern sanctuaries and ascetic academes where the white bosom of Phryne would have pleaded in vain. Christianity has not been beauty's only enemy, by any means, though, when the Book of Martyrs of Beauty comes to be written, it will, doubtless, be the Christian persecutions of beauty that will bulk largest in the record—for the Beauty of Holiness and the Holiness of Beauty have been warring creeds from the beginning.

At the present moment, there is reason to fear, or to rejoice—according to one's individual leanings—that the Religion of Beauty is gaining upon its ancient rival, for perhaps never since the Renaissance has there been such a widespread impulse to assert Beauty and Joy as the ideals of human life. As evidence one has but to turn one's eyes on the youth of both sexes as they rainbow the city thoroughfares with their laughing, heartless faces, evident children of beauty and joy, "pagan" to the core of them, however ostensibly Christian their homes and their country. In our time, at all events, Beauty has never walked the streets with so frank a radiance, so confident an air of security in her eyes and in her carriage, as in her subtly shaped and subtly scented garments, so conspicuous a challenge to the musty, out-

worn proprieties to frown upon her all they please. From the humblest shop-girl to the greatest lady there is apparent an intention to be beautiful, sweet maid, and let who will humdrum, at whatever cost, by whatever means. This, of course, at all periods, has been woman's chief thought, but still recently, in our times, she has more or less affected a certain secrecy in her intention. She has hinted rather than fully expressed it, as though fearing a certain flagrancy in too public an exhibition of her enchantments. It has hardly seemed proper to her heretofore to be as beautiful in the public gaze as in the sanctuary of her boudoir. But now, bless you, she has no such misgivings, and the flower-like effect upon the city streets is as dazzling as if, some fine morning in Constantinople, all the ladies of the various harems should suddenly appear abroad without their yashmaks, setting fire to the hearts and turning the heads of the unaccustomed male. Or, to make comparison nearer home, it is almost as startling as if the ladies of the various musical comedies in town should suddenly be let loose upon our senses in broad daylight, in all the adorable sorceries of "make-up" and diaphanous draperies. I swear that it can be no more thrilling to penetrate into that mysterious paradise "behind the scenes," than to walk up Fifth Avenue one of these summer afternoons, in the present year of grace—humming to one's self that wistful old song, which goes something like this:

The girls that never can be mine!
In every lane and street
I hear the rustle of their gowns,
The whisper of their feet;

The sweetness of their passing by,
 Their glances strong as wine
 Provoke the impossible sigh—
 Ah, girls that never can be mine!

So audacious has beauty become in these latter days, so proudly she walks abroad, making so superb an appeal to the desire of the eye, thighed like Artemis and bosomed like Aphrodite, or at whiles a fairy creature of ivory and gossamer and fragrance, with a look in her eyes of secret gardens; and so much is the wide world at her feet, and one with her in the vanity of her fairness—that I sometimes fear an impending *dies iræ*, when the dormant spirit of Puritanism will reassert itself, and some stern priest thunder from the pulpit of worldly vanities and the wrath to come. Indeed, I can well imagine in the near future some modern Savonarola presiding over a new Bonfire of Vanities in Union Square, on which, to the droning Moody and Sankey hymns, shall be cast all the fascinating Parisian creations, the puffs and rats, the powder and the rouge, the darling stockings, and all such concomitant bewitcheries that to-day make Manhattan a veritable Isle of Circe, all to go up in savage sectarian flame, before the eyes of melancholy young men, and filling all the city with the perfume of beauty's holocaust. At street corners, too, will stand great books in which weeping maidens will sign their names, swearing before high heaven to wear nothing but gingham and bed ticking for the dreary remainder of their lives. Such a day may well come, as it has often come before, and certainly will if women persist in being so deliberately beautiful as they are at present.

It is curious how, from time immemorial, man seems to have associated the idea of evil with beauty, and shrunk from it with a sort of ghostly fear, while, at the same time, drawn to it by force of its hypnotic attraction. Strangely enough, beauty has been regarded as the most dangerous enemy of the soul, and the powers of darkness that are supposed to lie in wait for that frail and fluttering Psyche, so precious and apparently so perishable, are usually represented as taking shapes of beguiling

loveliness — Lamias, Loreleis, wood nymphs, and witches with blue flowers for their eyes. Lurking in its most innocent forms, the grim ascetic has affected to find a leaven of conception, and whenever any reformation is afoot, it is always beauty that is made the first victim, whether it takes the form of a statue, a stained glass window or a hair ribbon. "Homeliness is next to godliness," though not officially stated as an article of the Christian creed, has been one of the most active of all Christian tenets. It has always been easier far for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of Heaven than for a gloriously beautiful woman. Presumably such a one might be in danger of corrupting the saints, somewhat unaccustomed to such apparitions.

In this Christian fear and hatred of beauty the democratic origin of the Christian religion is suggestively illustrated, for beauty, wherever found, is always mysteriously aristocratic, and thus instinctively excites the fear and jealousy of the common people. When, in the third century, Christian mobs set about their vandalistic work of destroying the "pagan" temples, tearing down the beautiful calm gods and goddesses from their pedestals and breaking their exquisite marble limbs with brutish mallets, it was not, we may be sure, of the danger to their precious souls they were thinking, but of their patrician masters who had worshiped these fair images, and paid great sums to famous sculptors for such adornment of their sanctuaries. Perhaps it was human enough, for to those mobs beauty had long been associated with oppression. Yet how painful to picture those golden marbles, in all their immortal fairness, confronted with the hideousness of those fanatic, ill-smelling multitudes! Wonderful religionists, forsooth, that thus break with foolish hands and trample with swinish hoofs the sacred vessels of divine dreams. Who would not

. . . rather be

A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn,—
 So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
 Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn;
 Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea;
 Or hear old Triton blow his wreathèd horn.

One can imagine the priest of such a violated sanctuary stealing back in the quiet moonlight, when all the mob fury had passed away, seeking amid all the wrack of fallen columns and shattered carvings for any poor fragments of god or goddess at whose tranquil, fair-ordered altar he had ministered so long; and gathering such as he might find—maybe a mighty hand still the hand of a god albeit in overthrow, or some marble curls of the sculptured ambrosial locks, or maybe even the bruised breast of the goddess, white as a water lily in the moon. Then, seeking out some secret corner of the sacred grove, how reverently he would bury the precious fragments away from profane eyes, and go forth homeless into a mysteriously changing world, from which glory and loveliness were thus surely passing away. Other priests, as we know, more fortunate than he, had forewarnings of such impending sacrilege, and were able to anticipate the mob, and bury their beautiful images in safe and secret places, there to await, after the lapse of twelve centuries, the glorious resurrection of the Renaissance. A resurrection, however, by no means free from danger, even in that resplendent dawn of human intelligence, for Christianity was still the enemy of beauty, save in the Vatican, and the ignorant priest of the remote village where the spade of the peasant had revealed the sleeping marble was certain to declare the beautiful image an evil spirit, and have it broken up forthwith and ground for mortar, unless some influential scholar or powerful lord imbued with "the new learning" chanced to be on hand to save it from destruction. Yes, even at that time when beauty was being victoriously born again, the mad fear of her raged with such panic in certain minds that when Savonarola lit his great bonfire to which reference has already been made, so subtle a servant of beauty as Botticelli, fallen into a sort of religious dotage, cast his own paintings into the flames—to the lugubrious rejoicings of the sanctimonious Piagnoni—as Savonarola's followers were called; predecessors of those still gloomier zealots who, two cen-

turies later, were to turn England into a sort of whitewashed prison, with crop-headed, psalm-singing religious maniacs for gaolers. When Charles the First

. . . bow'd his comely head
Down, as upon a bed,

at Whitehall, Beauty also laid her head upon the block at his side. Ugliness, parading as piety, took her place, and once more the breaking of images began, the banishment of music, the excommunication of grace and gentle manners and personal adornments. Gaiety became penal, and a happy heart or a beautiful smile were of the devil, and something like hanging matters—but happy hearts and beautiful smiles must have been rare things in England during the Puritan Commonwealth. Such as were left had taken refuge in France, where men might worship God and Beauty in the same church, and where it was not necessary, as at Oxford, to bury your stained glass windows out of the reach of the mob—those

"Stained windows richly dight,
Casting a dim religious light,"

which even the Puritan Milton could thus celebrate. Doubtless, that English Puritan persecution was the severest that Beauty has been called upon to endure. She still suffers from it, need one say, to this day, particularly in New England, where if the sculptured images of goddess and nymph are not exactly broken to pieces by the populace, it is from no good will toward them, but rather from an ingrained reverence for any form of property, even though it be nude, and where, at all events, they are under the strict surveillance of a highly proper and respectable police, those distinguished guardians of American morals.

It is worth while to try and get at the reason for this widespread, deep-rooted fear of beauty, for some reason there must surely be. Such instinctive feelings, on so broad a scale, are not accidental. And so soon as one begins to analyze the attitude of religion toward beauty, the reason is not far to seek.

All religions are made up of a spiritual element and a moral element, the moral

element being the temporary, practical, so to say, working side of religion, concerned with this present world, and the limitations and necessities of the various societies that compose it. The spiritual element, the really important part of religion, has no concerning with time and space, temporary mundane laws or conduct. It concerns itself only with the eternal properties of things. Its business is the contemplation and worship of the mystery of life—"the mystery we make darker with a name."

Now, great popular religions, designed as they are for the discipline and control of the great brute masses of humanity, are almost entirely occupied with morality, and what passes in them for spirituality is merely mythology, an element of picturesque supernaturalism calculated to enforce the morality with the multitude. Christianity is such a religion. It is mostly a matter of conduct here and now upon the earth. Its mystic side does not properly belong to it, and is foreign to, not to speak of its being practically ignored by, the average "Christian." It is a religion designed to work hand in hand with a given state of society, making for the preservation of such laws and manners and customs as are best fitted to make that society a success here and now, a worldly success in the best sense of the term. Mohammedanism is a similar religion calculated for the needs of a different society. Whatever the words or intentions of the founders of such religions, their kingdoms are essentially of this world. They are not mystic, or spiritual, or in any way concerned with infinite and eternal things. Their business is the moral policing of humanity. Morality, as of course its name implies, is a mere matter of custom, and therefore varies with the variations of races and climates. It has nothing to do with spirituality, and in fact the best morals are often the least spiritual, and vice versa. It will be understood then that any force which is apt to disturb this moral, or, more exactly speaking, social order will meet at once with the opposition of organized "religions" so called, and the more spiritual it is, the greater will be the opposi-

tion, for it will thus be the more dangerous.

Now one begins to see why Beauty is necessarily the bugbear, more or less, of all religions, or, as I prefer to regard them, "organized moralities," for Beauty is neither moral nor immoral, being, as she is, a purely spiritual force, with no relation to man's little schemes of being good and making money and being knighted and so forth. For those who have eyes to see, she is the supreme spiritual vision vouchsafed to us upon the earth—and, as that, she is necessarily the supreme danger to that materialistic use and wont by which alone a materialistic society remains possible. For this reason our young men and maidens—particularly our young men—must be guarded against her, for her beauty sets us adream, prevents our doing our day's work, makes us forget the soulless occupations in which we wither away our lives. The man who loves beauty will never be mayor of his city, or even sit on the board of aldermen. Nor is he likely to own a railroad, or be a captain of industry. Nor will he marry for her money a woman he does not love. The face of beauty makes all such achievements seem small and absurd. Such so-called successes seem to him the dearest forms of failure. In short, Beauty has made him divinely discontented with the limited human world about him, divinely incapable of taking it seriously, or heeding its standards or conditions. No wonder society should look upon Beauty as dangerous, for she is constantly upsetting its equilibrium and playing havoc with its smooth schemes and smug conventions. She outrages the "proprieties" with "the innocence of nature," and disintegrates "select" and "exclusive" circles with the wand of Romance. For earthly possessions or rewards she has no heed. For her they are meaningless things, mere idle dust and withered leaves. Her only real estate is in the moon, and the one article of her simple creed, "Love is enough."

Love is enough: though the world be a-waning
And the woods have no voice but the voice of
complaining,

Though the sky be too dark for dim eyes to discover
 The gold cups and daisies fair blooming there-
 under,
 Though the hills be held shadows, and the sea
 a dark wonder,
 And this day draw a veil over all deeds passed
 over,
 Yet their hands shall not tremble, their feet
 shall not falter;
 The void shall not weary, the fear shall not
 alter
 These lips and these eyes of the loved and the
 lover.

Those who have looked into her eyes see limitless horizons undreamed of by those who know her not, horizons summoning the soul to radiant adventures beyond the bounds of space and time. The world is so far right in regarding Beauty with a sort of superstitious dread, as a presence almost uncanny among our mere mortal concerns, a daemonic thing—which is what it has meant when it has not unnaturally confused it with the spirits of evil, for surely it is a supernatural stranger in a midst, a fairy element, and, like the Loreleis and the Lamias, it does beckon its notaries to enchanted realms away and afar from "all the uses of the world." To them, therefore, also it brings the thrill of a different and nobler fear—the thrill of the mortal

in presence of the immortal. A strange feeling of destiny seems to come over us as we first look into the beautiful face we were born to love. It seems veritably an apparition from another and lovelier world, to which it summons us to go with it. That is what we mean when we say that love and death are one; for death, to the thought of love, is but one of the gates to that other world, a gate to which we instinctively feel Love has the key. That surely is the meaning of the old fairy stories of men who have come upon the white woman in the woodland, and followed her, never to be seen again of their fellows, or of those who, like Hylas, have met the water nymph by the lily spring, and sank with her down into the crystal depths. The strange earth on which we live is just such a place of enchantment, neither more or less, and some of us have met that fair face, with a strange suddenness of joy and fear, and followed and followed it on till it vanished beyond the limits of the world. But our failure was that we did not follow that last white beckoning of the hand:

And I awoke and found me here
 On the cold hill's side.



MEMORY

By Katherine Williams Sinclair

IN half-light like that of evening, soothing in its deepening ray,
 Comes a sense of peace enfolding, where the beauty of the day
 Seems subdued, and strangely chastened, like a dying rainbow hue,
 And I know 'tis Memory calling from the dear dead past, and you;
 Calling 'cross a widening gulf of gray and hopeless years
 To those blossom promise hours, that bear fruitage in my tears;
 Yet my heart, while ever yearning, has long passed beyond despair,
 I am happy in my dreaming, though I have *not* ceased to care,
 For the cadence of life's singing bears a minor tone from you,
 Where the bitter-sweet of memory ever hauntingly runs through.

THEN SHOULD YOU KNOW

By Ivan Swift

ON shores beneath the green flare of the north,
For weary days the elements have crossed
The peaceful seasons and the low skies tossed
With melancholy gray. It seemed henceforth
There could be no more sun nor laughing flowers,
No golden morn and no glad birds afield.
Such time man's faith is frail and strong hearts yield
The truce of hope against the sullen powers.

If so the light of day should no more shine
Upon green islands and the purple sea,
And moon and stars should fail and cease to be,
Even as candles spent in some damp mine—
Then should you know the deeps of my despair,
The Hagar heart and thirst uncomforted,
When we have quarreled—the fault upon my head—
And alien lovers stroke your weeping hair.

If you could be some sad-souled Eskimo,
Pent in his lodge of ice through endless years
Of starless night, when quick upon his spears
The flowering noon should break—then you would know
How sweet is your returning grace to me,
How holier than heaven your guileless eyes
And grateful your forgiveness! So replies
God to the lovelorn in Eternity.



TO be important is one thing; to look important is another thing—but to feel important! There you have the fellow who enjoys his own society.



SAYING the right thing at the right time isn't in it with keeping still at the right time.

THE DISTANCE BACK

By John Amid

"CALL Mr. Mullertal."

There was a stir in the group of reporters and witnesses at the back of the long room where the coroner's jury was holding its session, and a slight, light-haired young fellow stepped forward. Below his white forehead and almost imperceptible eyebrows, his eyes of watery blue, not exactly roving, shifted quickly from person to person. As he took his seat in the chair at the vacant side of the big table about which the members of the jury were seated, he was the focus of attention in the hushed chamber. There was a sense of waiting, of suspended judgment, of soon-to-be-heard momentous utterances in the air. This man was the conductor of the rear car of the standing train—the man upon whose testimony the railroad's own investigating board, hastily summoned the preceding forenoon, had made its report exonerating the corporation from all blame for the wreck, and flatly accusing the motorman of the ramming train of criminal carelessness.

Raymond Mullertal was duly sworn.

"Mr. Mullertal, how long have you been in the employ of the Interurban?"

"Nine months."

"Any previous railroad experience?"

"No, sir."

"Kindly give us your account of the wreck."

"You mean what I did?"

"Everything. Begin at the beginning. You were a conductor on the rear car of the standing train, were you not?"

"Yes, sir."

"All right. Now tell us about it."

"Well, sir, it was this way. We were

running from the Exposition grounds with full cars. People were standing in the aisles. We had a three-car train, and were running on time. Just before we came to Orchard Hill station I felt Jim slowing her down. We'd been drifting from the slowboard and were going maybe forty miles. When we stopped I got out and saw that the Orchard Hill operator wouldn't give us the board. I waited a moment to see if we'd get the board, and then Macey—he had the car ahead of me—came back to tell me that there was a wire down ahead and I'd have to go back. I took the lantern and went back a long way. We'd pulled around the turn this side of the slowboard, and were right in the cut, with Orchard Hill station straight ahead. I went back eight or nine hundred feet—it seemed like a lot more. After I got around the curve I saw the other train coming, a long way off, at the bottom of the grade. So I started to run, to make sure he'd have plenty of room to stop in. I was a long way from the turn when he came past me, going easy forty-five miles. I gave him the signal, but he didn't pay any attention. When I saw he wasn't going to stop I pretty near went crazy, and jumped onto the track until he was almost on top of me. I was so close that when I jumped back his fender almost got me, and I smashed the light. I saw he was loaded to the doors, and started to run back. He gave a whistle as he went around the curve, sort of scared. Then I heard the smash."

There was an audible sigh as Mullertal finished his account, made of the released breath of his tensed audience. This was what they had been waiting

for. Up to this time the investigation had dragged along, each witness corroborating the testimony given before the investigating board of the company. Things certainly looked bad for John Maloney, motorman of the ramming train.

From his position at the rear of the room, H. L. Benedict, special counsel for the railroad, a fastidiously dressed, black-eyed man with shell-rimmed eyeglasses, noted with satisfaction that Mullertal was making a good impression. Half an hour more, and the company would be out of the woods.

"Mr. Mullertal, you say you went back eight or nine hundred feet. How do you know how far back you went?"

"Well, I don't know exactly, of course, but I can estimate distances pretty well. I know I was a long way from the curve."

"Did you count your steps, or anything like that?"

"No, sir; I wasn't thinking anything about the distance until I got around the curve."

"You thought about it then?"

"Yes, sir. As soon as I saw Maloney's headlight. He was a long way off, and I wondered how far he'd get before he saw me."

"After he'd passed you, you thought of how far back you were from your own train?"

"Yes, sir, in a way; I was afraid of a smash, and wondered if he'd have time to stop after he hit the curve."

"You say you gave him the signal, and did everything you could to stop him?"

"Yes, sir. I even jumped on the track, and then smashed the lantern on the front of his train."

"And he paid no attention?"

"He didn't stop, and he didn't whistle that he saw me. He ought to have given me two whistles; he didn't give any until he hit the curve, and then only one quick one."

"That will do for the present, Mr. Mullertal."

As the conductor walked back to the far end of the room his eyes sought the face of the railroad's special counsel;

but that important man was watching, as were all the rest, the accused motorman. John Maloney looked pretty sick.

"Call Mr. Maloney."

The strained silence of the room was intense as the motorman of the ramming train walked toward the vacant chair by the table. Was this round-faced boy, with a damp, curly lock of hair straggling over his temple, the inhuman monster responsible for the most terrible wreck in the history of the Interurban—the wreck that had turned the railroad cut at Orchard Hill into a veritable shambles, filling every morgue and hospital in the city? He would have to clear himself! Every bit of the evidence was now overwhelmingly against him. Even the sentiment of the reporters, that had at first been inclined to search amid his accusers for the fine Italian hand of the railroad corporation that wished to clear itself of the implied charge of running trains too close together, was now swinging over to Mullertal, who could tell so straight a story.

John Maloney was sworn. He raised his hand listlessly as the oath was administered. Obviously the papers had not overstated his condition when they reported him a poor witness before the road's board, still in almost a dazed condition.

"Mr. Maloney, how long have you been in the employ of the Interurban?"

Dully the man about whom the chains of evidence were tightening looked at the coroner. He seemed to be grappling with the question, as though it were difficult.

"I'm—not—sure. A pretty long time, I guess. Six—seven years, I guess."

From one end of the table a long, lean, elderly juror, with kindly mouth and wise, tired eyes, leaned forward and talked earnestly for a moment with Dr. Bradbury, the coroner. There was compassion in his voice as he suggested postponing the hearing until this witness should be able to make a better defense of himself. "The man has no realization of the meaning of these accusations," he ended. "He can't see the kind of murderer we're making of him." But Dr. Bradbury—a portly, pompous

little official, obsessed with the majesty of his office—shook his head. What difference could it make? The evidence was conclusive. The man would have a fair trial—they weren't finding a true bill.

"Mr. Maloney, kindly give us your account of the accident."

For several moments the motorman studied the bandages on his hands, apparently trying to collect his thoughts. When he began at last to speak, it was with a dull, expressionless voice, as though the words meant nothing to him. Gradually, however, there crept into his wide blue eyes a hint of the horror that had all but bereft the man of his reason, and his hearers thrilled to the hinted terror in his tones.

"I was running in from Exposition Park Sunday evening, about eight forty—eight forty, Sunday evening—with three cars, full of people, all full. My God, they were standing on the platform with me! . . . I came up the grade toward the Orchard Hill cut pretty fast; it's good going on the up-grade there, and I had my power all fed up. All up. When I reached the slowboard the other side of the curve I cut off and started to drift. Then I saw—saw the light and Mully there—why, I was right on him. So I reached for the cord to give him his answer, and saw the tail lights—why, we were right on 'em. As we came up I saw the platform of the train was all full of people crowding back away from my headlight—my God, there was a girl there looking right into my face, with her eyes all glassy! . . ." He covered his face with his hands to shut out the memory, and shuddered convulsively.

"Well!" The coroner broke the silence sharply, clearing his throat. "What did you do after the accident? Why did you run away? Where did you go?"

Again there was silence, while the motorman tried to pull himself from his memories.

"I—I don't remember all of it." There was a pleading note in the broken tones. "I—I was still on the car, somewhere, and I had the controller in my hand; I know, because somebody stepped

on my hand, and I said, 'Get off; you're hurting my hand.' And then I was on the bank, and the cars were down below me in the cut, and they were burning red lights. So I got up and walked around, and at Orchard Hill station I caught a yellow car and went home, because my wife was sick."

Again the juror who had remonstrated before leaned from his end of the table and talked to the coroner, but the doctor shook his head.

"How fast were you running as you approached the Orchard Hill curve?"

"I was going pretty fast. I had my power all fed up. All up. I was going pretty close to fifty—perhaps forty-eight miles an hour." The motorman's face was clearer as his mind went to familiar details concerning the running of a train.

The coroner nodded. Earlier in the inquest one of the company's engineers had testified that cars of the five-hundred class could make from forty-five to fifty miles an hour up a one and one-half per cent grade, such as that at Orchard Hill, and that when going at full speed a three-car train could not be stopped inside of six or seven hundred feet.

"Where were you when you first saw Mullertal's signal—you saw it all right?"

Maloney nodded slowly.

"I started to drift at the slowboard. Then I saw the light and Mully there—I was right on him. So I reached for the cord and saw the tail lights; why—" The look of terror returned to the blue eyes as the mind started again upon the worn circle.

"One more question, Mr. Maloney. Did you see the signal before or after you passed the slowboard?" Dr. Bradbury turned and nodded to his associates to call their attention to the importance of this question.

"Why—why, I'm not sure. I think it was after I'd passed it. I cut off at the slowboard and started to drift, and then I saw—"

"Yes, yes. We've heard that part. But can you swear you didn't see the signal until after you'd passed the slow-

board? That's what we want to know. Now think hard. Remember you're under oath. Did you pass the board before you saw the signal?"

"Why—why, I'm not sure. I wouldn't want to swear to it. No, sir."

The coroner turned again and nodded to the other members of his jury.

"Well, gentlemen, shall we go any further? You've all heard this testimony. That slowboard is nearly five hundred feet from the end of the curve. It's two hundred from the end of the curve to where the train was standing in the cut. That's seven hundred feet. All the evidence we've heard has been against this man's story; Mullertal there gives a perfectly straightforward account. His story corroborates what the preceding witnesses said. Maloney here is evidently not himself, but at that there is nothing in his evidence to indicate that he could contradict a single point that's been brought out. What do you say, gentlemen?" He turned back to the motorman, who was again studying his bandaged hands. "That's all," he said curtly.

From his end of the table the elderly juror who had remonstrated about questioning the motorman leaned toward Dr. Bradbury. As he spoke something in his look was suggestive of mentality. He seemed more a judge than a juror.

"Call Mr. Mullertal again," he suggested.

The star witness returned to the chair which Maloney had just vacated. He was smiling, confident, presenting a great contrast to the man accused.

"We'll keep you only a moment," explained the man at the end of the table apologetically. "There's a little point we want to have cleared up." He paused, and for several moments busied himself arranging some papers on the table before him.

"Mr. Mullertal, you say you went back along the track eight or nine hundred feet."

"Yes, sir, fully that."

"And made every possible effort to stop the approaching train."

"Yes, sir."

"Is it possible that it could have been more than nine hundred feet?"

"Yes, sir; it might easily have been a full thousand. I was a long way from the curve."

"Yes. You knew there were torpedoes for signalling on your lantern?"

"Yes, sir. I didn't think it wise to stop and put them in place, as I wanted to get as far as possible from the curve, and felt certain that my signal would be enough."

"Yes. Now another thing. It was a dark night?"

"Yes, sir. It was pretty dark, and a little misty, too."

"How far away would you be from the approaching train, do you think, before the motorman would see you?"

"I don't know, sir. Not very far."

"No? In fact, it would be nothing surprising if he didn't see you until he was almost on you?"

"Nothing surprising, sir." The man was plainly somewhat mystified at this apparently aimless series of questions.

"Now, Mullertal, you know how important your testimony is. You know what it means to the Interurban. You know what it means to you. You know what it may mean to Maloney. If you had time to get way back up the track and didn't get there, it would put the blame for the accident largely on you. If you got back all right, and didn't manage to stop the train, it puts it all on Maloney. But if you didn't have time to get far enough, it shows that the crowded trains were being run too close together, without proper safeguards, and puts it directly up to the company. You understand that?"

"I think so, sir."

"Yes. And you understand it means a lot to the company to keep itself clean, even if it has to put Maloney in bad. The company isn't any too well off in the popular estimation right now. This is the third wreck this year. There are franchises and things like that. And then there are the damage suits—hundreds of thousands of dollars' worth. If you were five hundred feet behind that train when Maloney passed you, the company would be in a rather bad hole."

If you were only two hundred feet back, at the end of the curve, the hole would be a lot worse. But if you were a thousand feet back, the company would be a-l-l r-i-g-h-t. Now, how—far—back did you say you were?"

Mullertal was a trifle pale, but not in the least shaken by the seeming attempt at third degree work on the part of the lean juror. He answered with a quiet, steady voice that won a nod of approval from the pompous little coroner:

"Eight or nine hundred feet, sir, at the very least. Possibly a thousand."

"Yes, that's just what you said. And you told a convincing story, too. You've been a good witness for the company. But there's this one point that I want to have cleared up. *If* you were as far back as you say—nearly a thousand feet from the standing train; and *if* you were so sure that you would be seen that you didn't think it even necessary to use torpedoes; *if* you knew that on account of the darkness you might not be seen until the approaching train was almost on you—*why, knowing* that the fellow had *several hundred feet more than he needed* in which to stop his train, so that there wasn't a chance in a hundred of a wreck after he'd once seen you, did you get so scared that you risked your

life to stay on the track until the last possible moment, and even broke your lantern on the front of the train?"

Mullertal's face went almost gray. His hands shook.

"I—I don't know!" he stammered.

"No!" The lean juror's voice thundered denunciation. "*Of course you don't!* What you know is, that you were right at the end of the curve when that train came along, and that John Maloney didn't have a thing in the world to do but grab his emergency brake and smash into your train at thirty-five miles an hour. That's what you know! You were right in the cut when you saw his headlight almost on you as he came toward the curve!

"Now, what we want to know is: *Who* promised you that the company would stay with you if you could manage to convince us that you got back a thousand feet? He's the man we want! Remember you're up against perjury now! *Who was he?*"

"Mr.—Mr. Benedict!" gasped Mullertal, rattled, badly scared. Crouching low in his seat, reminding one of an animal at bay, he turned toward the commotion at the far end of the big room. The reporters were making a rush for the door.



RARER THAN COMETS

By Witter Bynner

ACUTER than the tick of time
Is the most trivial word you say—
And fitter than the perfect rhyme
Your lips each moment of the day.

Rarer than comets waited for
Or rays of dawn in all the lands,
Move your two feet upon the floor,
Gleam the ten fingers of your hands.

THE TOO-HIGH PEDESTAL

By Henry McHarg Davenport

IT was Morning.

As the door slammed, Rosella shivered and stifled a weary yawn with the soft pink of one small palm. A man had just gone out. A man who worshiped her; who thought her the most noble and spiritual of women, to kiss whose lips would be too great a sacrilege for any man to dare.

As the door slammed, Rosella shivered and stifled a weary yawn with the soft pink of one small palm.

* * *

It was Afternoon.

Rosella stood at her window, following with amused eyes the fading figure of a man in the street below. Beside her a wealth of rare exotic flowers, bonbons, costly jeweled trinkets—tribute of the man just gone. A man who adored her slavishly; who thought her the acme of physical perfection, to kiss whose lips would be too much happiness for one man to bear.

Rosella stood at her window, following with amused eyes the fast fading figure of a man.

* * *

It was Evening.

Rosella sank back slumberously against the satin softness of her divan, happy with relief the door had closed. Near at hand a clutter of learned volumes, the gift of the man just gone. A man who loved her second only to his books; who thought her the most intellectual of women, to kiss whose lips would be too much like mocking Literature with Life.

Rosella sank back slumberously against the satin softness of her divan, happy with relief the door had closed.

* * *

It was Night.

Rosella's eyes were brighter than stars of a wintry eve, and her cheeks like almond blossoms, but sad the heart within her for the sound of the slamming door. Tossed to one side the flowers, bonbons and jeweled offerings of the day. A man had just gone out. A man who thought her neither a goddess of snow to be worshiped from afar, a shrine for sacrifices or a new literature—but a woman of flesh and blood, made to love and be loved with all the passionate and unreasoning abandon of youth; to kiss whose lips was the most natural and delightful thing imaginable.

Rosella's eyes were brighter than stars of a wintry eve, and her cheeks like almond blossoms, but sad the heart within her for the sound of the slamming door.

THE GILDED MEAN

By Holworthy Hall

NOT in a spirit of levity, but in a grim and incommunicative mood, I have sometimes asserted that woman is unreasonable. Lady readers will kindly keep their seats while the narrative is in motion—I have made this statement at the risk of excessive personal discomfort.

So much for the introduction. The best part of the story, I believe, is in the anticlimax.

Sand City has been a metropolis for so many years that the paint is beginning to crack on the street signs of the moving picture theaters. By no stretch of the imagination can it be classed with Lakewood, Newport or Atlantic City as a fungus growth. It is a sturdy oak among such eruptive villages as these; a proud commercial city rich in resources and plethoric in police. Its position on the main line of the railroad and the Mohawk Division of the barge canal have brought it wealth, power and pick-pockets in brimming measure. Generations of men have been born there; a large number of them have inadvertently died there; and today twenty thousand citizens, alive or at least unburied, admit Sand City to be their residence.

On the top of one of the loftiest eminences in the city the mansion of Senator Hamilton rears its proud cupola eighteen feet above sea level. It is a handsome home, built in the period when Plancus was consul, Grant was President and the sound of the jigsaw was heard in the land. From the street a trimly razored lawn creeps back to the house, and hides itself among the phlox and geranium plants abutting on the front veranda; and the red brick walk that curves seductively from the carved gran-

ite horseblock to the family entrance is guarded on one side by a castiron dog and on the other by a stag at bay. To the average wayfarer, opening the muffler cut-out as he approaches the hill, there is little to distinguish the Hamilton home from that of the Jacks-sons on the left, or of the Johnsons on the right—only the breed of the iron dogs and the size of the iron stags. But inside . . .

Elsie Hamilton!

There are, categorically speaking, but three degrees of woman: those who are born beautiful, those who achieve beauty, and spinsters. Elsie was all that is set down under the caption "beautiful" in the Thesaurus, and much that O. Henry added to that romantic treatise. She was large and dark and vivacious, what a lapidary would call a jeweler's brunette—ruby lips, pearly teeth, turquoise eyes. She could instill into the caller within her gates the immediate intention of paying the first installment on a diamond with basket setting; and her laugh, when it interrupted the Sand City Symphony Orchestra, made the instruments seem out of tune.

Then why, say you, was Elsie not engaged in busheling the Sunday raiment of some exponent of clean-limbed American manhood? Why, instead of dragging out the weary round of dances, teas, receptions, bridges, cotillions and golf foursomes, was she not searching the baby's bank for quarters with which to propitiate the gas meter? The answer is simple, and it is not a secret. Elsie had a father—the Senator.

There will positively be no biography of Senator Hamilton. The story of his life is on a prominent page of Bun and

Wallstreet's dictionary of wit and wisdom entitled, "Who Owes Who in America." It reads Aar, and, translated into clear and idiomatic English, implies that Senator Hamilton is on good terms with his bank.

Candidates for the position of son-in-law were many, but the two who survived the primaries and appeared to be the direct choice of the people were Rufus Jennings and Archibald Potts.

Rufus was the inevitable outcome of a contested will. He contested it to the fullest expense of the law, subsequently accepting employment with one of the lawyers. He had never done anything but try to find something to do, and had achieved success only in his failure to do so. He had an unerring taste for cravats and pink drinks at the Sandstone Club, and was always in need of a dinner invitation for Friday night. It must be said that Rufus was handsome. He was about the height and weight of a good actor, and his chief ambition was to locate a rhyme for either Elsie or Hamilton.

Archibald Potts earned precisely as much money as Rufus and saved it all, sometimes more. He was a short, squat individual with the graceful lines of a seven-passenger tonneau, and he wore freckles every summer. He would stride up the brick walk of the Hamilton home smoking a five-cent cigar, extinguish it carefully and place it between the brows of the stag at bay. When he went down the path on the return trip he would recover the cigar, borrow a match and think of Rockefeller.

The last of the cast of characters was a man named Smith. For purposes of narration, I shall refer to him as I. My claim to glory is based on an incessant ability to perform on the mandolin all marches, waltzes, rags, overtures and bugle calls ever written in the key of G.

Early in the year I perceived that my further presence at the Sunday night conventions was unnecessary. However, I continued to attend and to participate in the hebdomadal Welsh rarebit. As a scratched entry in the matrimonial stakes I took part in the discussions of suffrage, divorce and the merits of

the Fitch-Peoria motorboat. I listened diffidently to the rendition of "Tannhäuser" and Emmet's "Lullaby" on the phonograph, and I was present when Rufus Jennings gripped the arms of his chair firmly and inquired:

"Elsie, what kind of man do you think a girl ought to marry?"

Elsie looked at him earnestly and spread her hands appealingly.

"I don't know that I ever thought about it," she lied comfortably. "But—let me think. The ideal man isn't rich; he must have the simplicity of Sir Launfal, or Sir Galahad. He should be brave and just and kind and gentle—"

"You don't think he should be rich?" interrupted Archibald.

"Not necessarily, but he should be prudent, and at the same time not miserly."

Here Rufus and Archibald looked at each other in mutual sympathy.

"I shouldn't want him to spend all his money on clothes and cigarettes, but I shouldn't want him to wear a groove in the pavement in front of the newspaper offices to read the bulletins instead of buying a paper. Even if papa has surrounded me with every luxury and some comforts, I don't expect to marry a rich man. I should like a little house with a garden and—say, a young business or professional man: a lawyer, or an architect, or an insurance broker."

It was kind of her to mention insurance. It was the first attention, direct or indirect, that she had given me for twenty minutes. Archibald was an architect, Rufus was a lawyer; and Archibald and Rufus looked at each other as if estimating their comparative height, weight, reach, footwork and ability to take punishment.

"Would you prefer Worth gowns and a worthless husband," asked Archibald, "to true merit and a checking account?"

"Or," said Rufus, "would you rather live on family pride and family prunes than enjoy life as you live it? I am asking," he said, "in the interest of a young friend. He is in love with a sweet and beautiful girl, and he seeks information from me rather than write a letter to appear in the public prints in the

Love and Sediment column, with an answer thereto by the assistant circulation manager."

"Strangely enough," commented Archibald, "I was also thinking of a very dear friend. The mere possession of money is naught to him. He has been saving up for a little home, and he has felt that the lady of his affections would prefer flour in the barrel after marriage to flowers from the florist at present. He wonders sometimes if the lady appreciates his thoughtfulness, and I promised him," said Archibald discreetly, "to ask the opinion of a disinterested friend."

"Your two friends," said Elsie, "should find the golden mean. When a girl wakes in the morning to find a few dozen orchids ready for breakfast, she naturally feels that a delicate attention has been paid her, but when her callers pause in the shadow of the portecochère to match nickels, and one of them takes a trolley car while the other two walk, she is constrained to think less fondly of their new semi-convertible evening suits."

"In other words—" began Rufus.

"In the same words," said Elsie. "To be perfectly frank, the average young man who calls on me hasn't the faintest perception of consistency. I wish he had. I'd like to see, just once, a Sand City man that isn't either a minnow or a whale. One kind spends Sunday evening here, and nothing the rest of the week. The other—oh, what's the use? There's a whole library of books telling young men how to succeed in anything. Most of them lose money, but that isn't the point. Tell your friends that no girl wants to live on bread and cheese and kisses, if she is also expected to furnish the bread and cheese, but that she doesn't like it any better if next month's salary has gone to pay for the ring."

It was still early when we departed, so early that both Rufus and Archibald professed their intention of making a second call that evening. With the swagger of a procession passing a given point Rufus strolled over to the Jacksons'. With the confidence of a golfer dormie nine and hole high, Archibald sauntered in the direction of the John-

sons'. And I, despicably knocking Archibald's half-smoked cigar from the frontal projection of the castiron stag, wandered down the hill to a clubhouse where congenial souls were inhaling Scotch and seltzer through yellow straws.

After the period of three months which must inevitably be supposed to elapse between acts one and two, Rufus Jennings admitted the novel virtue of economy, and pursued me for five blocks for the sole purpose of admitting it. His confession showed great fervor and imagination.

"Have you heard any rumors of what I've been doing?" he asked.

"If I had," said I, "I wouldn't listen to them. I still have some ideals of friendship."

"Listen," said Rufus: "I'm saving money hand over fist. In the last few months I've amassed a large amount, and I ask you as a friend to advise me how to invest it."

"No, Rufus," I told him. "I wouldn't go so far as to say that you're a deliberate and unqualified falsifier, but I know from personal experience that you don't want any advice whatsoever. You want sympathy and encouragement, and the services of a press agent. Am I right?"

Rufus grinned.

"You are," said he cheerfully. "Frankly speaking, your advice hasn't the weight and influence of a ten-cent piece in a Broadway restaurant. I'm not merely asking you how to invest my money, but I'm giving you an opportunity to mention here and there, judiciously and with emphasis, that I did ask you. I am living on expectations, hopes and Swiss cheese sandwiches, saving my money, and following in the footsteps of some of our noted financiers. Like them, I shun publicity. Do you understand?"

"Perfectly," said I. "In other words, you want me to be Paul Revere—to spread the report through every Middlesex village and farm—"

"Do you remember," asked he, "the hypothetical question I put to Elsie one night long ago—when I told her of two

friends of mine, and their discussion of pre-marital economy?"

"I do," I admitted. "And you want me to search out your hypocritical lady and explain matters. Well, I'll do it, Rufus. At the sacrifice of my personal feelings I'll do it. And I hope that you'll ask me to the wedding, but I'd be willing to wager a small wager that there won't be any."

"Meaning what?"

"You've gone from one extreme to the other," said I. "From the top of the shoot-the-chutes to the lagoon. You are reversing the sound principle of cumulative advertising."

"Not to be rude," stated Rufus, "but to make trial of our respective judgments, I would unwillingly consent to a slight wager. I'll modestly appraise my judgment as twice as good as yours, and bet you a hundred to fifty that the invitations are out within six weeks."

"I accept the nomination," said I. "I'm morally convinced that you have no intelligence above your collar button, so the bet stands."

"With the provision that you still spread the rumor?"

"I'll do it," said I, and we parted.

Two blocks down Main Street a man in a pink runabout yelled to me, and as he drew the car up beside the curb I recognized Archibald. He observed my look of astonishment, and hastened to explain himself.

"It's mine," he acknowledged with great pride. "It's the latest model two-cylinder, three-passenger, four-wheel Ruby Racer. I have paid down the small amount required as a guarantee of good faith, and it's mine—all mine."

I looked again at Archibald. He was clad in a new black and white checked suit, with a pink and white shirt and a green bow tie studded with pink diamonds. He was wearing a very pink pink in his buttonhole, and a very broad smile on his lips.

"Since when this affluence?" I demanded. "You used to be satisfied with the front seat of a trolley car on the airline division."

"If you remember a little conversation we had some time ago on the hill"—

he nodded his head in the general direction of the Adirondacks—"you'll recall the sisterly advice I received on the subject of matrimony and parsimony. These are a few of the results. I am on my way," said Archibald, "to dazzle the lady whose conceptions of the cost of high living bothered my—friend." He winked dramatically.

"Archibald," said I severely, "your friend was yourself, and I knew it all the time. You took an underhand advantage of an innocent girl, and you think you'll win her by this coarse method. I find it my unpleasant duty, Archibald, to tell you to beware of a deadly rival," and I prided myself of having already begun the educational campaign entrusted to me by my friend Rufus.

"Rival!" said Archibald, in the hoarse, threatening tone of a subway guard.

"Rival! What makes you think so?"

"Rufus Jennings came to me today to ask how to invest some money. A mere trifle—a few paltry thousands."

"What's that to do with the Ruby Racer?" demanded Archibald.

"Only this—that on the memorable evening of which you speak there were two prescriptions for painless reform. Mention was made of thrift as well as of extravagance. You've reformed—so has Rufus. May the better man win—and may I be the best man in either case."

Archibald leaned against the wheel in the negligent attitude familiar to the admirers of Barney Oldfield.

"My dear fellow," he said, "love and gasoline are inseparable companions. Women, after all, are human. Granting that Rufus and I have exchanged theories, I still recollect that the favorite author of our boyhood wrote several books relating to the rise of poor and deserving young men. I defy you to find a best-seller with the title of 'From Banker to Bootblack.' Life doesn't run that way. Rufus is going down hill as I am going up. The star of my rival is dimmed, and the astute parent of a certain young lady on her father's side will opine that I am swiftly climbing the ladder of success while Rufus has stepped on a broken rung."

"If I could be of any assistance,

Archibald—if you'd like to have me drop a gentle hint—"

"No, thank you," Archibald declined. "I'm going to take her out to the Country Club, and if I'm not able to drop a few gentle hints myself I'll talk 'em into a phonograph record. Thanking you for your kind attention," said Archibald, "I will now proceed."

He allowed the engine to roar hungrily for a moment before choking it into submission.

"To prove that I've reformed," challenged Rufus, "I'll bet with you. I never made a bet in my life, but I'll bet you two to one that my engagement will be announced within a month."

"Hundred to fifty?" said I nonchalantly.

"Correct," said Rufus.

"Thirty days from date?"

"Right again," said he. "I'm off," and letting in the clutch, he proceeded to bisect the traffic of Main Street in the most approved professional manner.

For two days nothing happened. On the third came the annual subscription dance of Troop X of the National Guard, which was exclusive in that Troop X was the only military organization in the county with the exception of the G. A. R. and two patrols of Boy Scouts. It was the heart convention of Sand City that an invitation to the Troop dance was equivalent to a request to two-step through life together, so that the majority of Sand City society was looking to Elsie Hamilton's partner as an indication of the appropriate gifts to select. Elsie, with the innate desire of every woman to prolong the public interest, called me on the telephone and asked me to break the deadlock by escorting her myself. Her mode of expression was not as brusque as that, but the purport was similar. Neither Rufus nor Archibald had invited her, each feeling certain that the other had already done so; and I was entirely too harmless to provoke suspicion. Of course I promised to take her, and then I hunted out Rufus and Archibald, Rufus first.

He said that, as a part of his system of economy, he couldn't squander ten dol-

lars on two tickets to a dance as long as he could turn on the phonograph any evening and dance in the hall for nothing. He was sure that the lady understood and approved his motives, and there the matter ended. Then I went to Archibald and found him studying a catalogue of house furnishings. I told him that I had discovered a beautiful and refined young lady in tears at the thought of remaining in her own boudoir on Saturday night instead of sacrificing a new gown to Terpsichore and the heavy feet of Sand City's young manhood. Archibald looked solemn, and said that unfortunately a previous engagement prevented his attendance. Naming no names, I explained that it would therefore be incumbent upon me to escort the young lady, and Archibald told me to escort a dozen if so many could be procured. There being no alternative open to a man of delicate perceptions, I bought two tickets from Lieutenant Caldwell, who was proprietor of the Lyceum Haberdashery, and began to practise wicked and fashionable measures according to the directions in the metropolitan papers.

There arrived the evening of the dance; a warm, sultry evening that promised a high mortality among dress collars and a ready market for cooling draughts at the buffet. Elsie, in a bewilderingly sweet costume that I know nothing at all about, and I drove to the Armory in the Senator's touring car, and entered what no self-respecting reporter would fail to describe as a veritable fairyland.

There was general curiosity as to the companion of Elsie Hamilton—and when she arrived with me, the he-gossips and she-gossips united in a great sigh of disappointment. Then, the preliminary scrutiny having been accomplished to the satisfaction of all concerned, the Sand City Symphony broke into the tender strains of "Everybody's Overdoing It," and "the large and brilliant gathering enjoyed the splendid floor and the excellent music until a late hour, etc., etc."

I will admit that after one or two dances I forgot all about Rufus and

Archibald, although both were friends faithful and true unto me and I was certain to win money from them. They had neglected a wonderful opportunity, for Elsie was never prettier, never wittier and never more adorable than on this particular evening. Then, too, it was noticeable that Rufus and Archibald were the only members of Sand City's exclusive circle missing from the festivities, with the exception of the little Jackson girl, who was just out, and the Johnson spinster, who was already going back. In spite of these conditions, I thoroughly enjoyed that dance, from the moment that I called for Elsie until the orchestra played "Home, Sweet Home" and the troopers gathered under the main chandelier and gave three cheers for the army.

It was still early when the Senator's touring car curved over the brow of the hill, and we saw that the Jackson and Johnson homes were brilliantly lighted. Even as I helped Elsie to the ground, the door of the Jackson house opened and there appeared in the doorway two figures. Elsie gasped in amazement, and I stood in astonishment and chagrin at the sight of two very palpable lovers bidding each other good night. For not more than two minutes we watched them, and then the figures separated, the door closed, the lights went out and a man walked briskly down the long walk to the street. Seeing us, he started violently, and came toward us.

"Rufus!" said Elsie.

"Good evening, friends," said Rufus, closely imitating the intonation of William Gillette at the climax of the third act. "I'm awfully glad to see you," he went on. "It'll be in the *Post* tomorrow, but I want to know tonight

because you've both helped me so much, Elsie especially. I—I'm engaged!"

Before we had time to collect our congratulations, the portal of the Johnson home swung outward, and in the bright light of the hallway we saw two people in close embrace. Shortly afterward Archibald Potts strolled out to the veranda, perceived us and hurried over.

"Well, this is luck!" cried Archibald. "I'm glad to see you—the three best friends I have in the world! I want you all to know the good news before it's in the papers—I'm engaged to Elizabeth Johnson. And I want to thank you," he added, turning to Elsie, "for pointing out exactly the right thing for me to do. You did it for me, Elsie!"

"She did it for me, too," declared Rufus, and they all shook hands ecstatically.

It seemed a very long time afterward that Elsie and I were alone in the drawing room of the Hamilton home. To my amazement, she seemed genuinely happy; she hummed a cheerful little tune and appeared as contented as though the two most desirable young men of Sand City had not deserted her colors on the same evening. My heart grieved for her.

"Elsie," said I, more in sorrow than in anger, "I haven't reformed at all, but will I do?"

"You foolish boy!" said the reigning beauty of Sand City. "Didn't you suppose I knew that Rufus and Archibald were telling me the truth when they gave me the history of their friends? I meant to marry you all the time!"

The only flaw in my happiness was the loss of two wagers of fifty dollars each; and exerting the privilege of a son-in-law, I borrowed the money from the Senator.



THE young regret that they are not understood; the old, that they are.



WHOM the gods destroy they first make popular.

THE REAL SALAMANDER

A Page from the Book of Broadway

By George Bronson-Howard

UPON the somewhat misleading euphemism of Shakespeare that man looks before and after, Carlyle remarks that, this being the case, it is surprising that he does not look around him occasionally and see what is going on under his eyes. Carlyle should have known that he dare not. All his life the average man lives in an atmosphere of what *ought* to be—or *ought not* to be. But admit that reality is real—never!

Thus, for instance, he fondly believes he is a Christian, and is encouraged in this fallacy by Church and State; when the most cursory examination of history will show that all the Christians died in Roman arenas, and that, since their patrician persecutors combined with their own failing mythology such portions of the martyrs' faith as pleased them—which, needless to say, did not include charity, humility or peace on earth—there has never been a Christian nation, nor even a Christian religion. Yet in nearly two thousand years, only a handful of men have dared face this fundamental fact; so how can the average man be expected to face any truth?

Hence it is not surprising that men live and die in utter ignorance, that any cunning knave may impose upon them if he has outward respectability, and, especially, that the shrewdest of them are no match for the stupidest woman, man being the slave of respectability, woman, forever primitive—or, as the average man would put it, lawless—having no unruly conscience to satisfy, daring to do those things she was born to do.

Which fact, borne well in mind, disposes almost altogether of her famous

"mystery," which is the foundation of most romances and at least one true story—this one you are about to read.

I

ACCORDING to the ideas of a contemporary, Dearie Davenant was a "salamander"—one of those female flappers who achieve the mythological feat of living in fire without a scorch to their precious little persons—who do nothing, in fact, that would render them in any way unworthy of serialization in a magazine that courts admittance to the parlor of "perfect ladies." This is to say that Miss Davenant—whose mother had found the name "Adeara" in the Seaside Library and had saved it unselfishly for her firstborn—demanded from men "the respect you would show your own sister." Meanwhile, she would accept any number of expensive presents, sell them and live upon them; but, since she took no actual cash, imagined herself to lead the life virtuous, waxing tumultuous did some rude man fail to recognize so apparent a fact. . . . Thus, no doubt, would she have gone on had she married the most eligible male sparrow available. But it so happened that one night an exceptionally unappreciative man—Carlenton by name—opened her eyes to the very low esteem in which sparrow hawks (or salamanders) were held by men of any moment, thus making her story worth telling; for, arousing her anger and ambition, it caused her, for a short while, to abandon her pursuit of male sparrows and to attempt the fascination of her superiors.

It was in one of Curate's private dining rooms that Carleton enlightened her. It was his party, and he considered that he had done the handsome thing—Miss Davenant being very pretty, he had desired her to know he did not hold her possession cheap. She had been allowed to bring any friends she chose; the table had been especially decorated; there were twenty-dollar gold pieces under the girls' plates, and under hers a jewel-studded gold mesh bag. Entertainment had been provided by vaudeville performers hired at considerable expense; the wines were of vintages that would have gratified even a gourmand; a special string orchestra had played turkey trots and tangos—in short, everybody had enough of everything, and Carleton considered that his lavishness in this was sufficient assurance that Dearie need have no fear of her future so long as she continued to please him.

But, when he had leaned over, whispering a request for a *tête-à-tête* on the following day, Miss Davenant, with all the dignity of a Daughter of the Revolution, requested to know what girl friend she should bring with her.

"Girl friend?" he had returned blankly. "Why, I want you alone. Tea at my apartments. *Tête-à-tête*, I said."

Immediately she sought to show him that he had been guilty of a grave social solecism. "I don't go to tea in men's apartments, Mr. Carleton," she said, putting down her cigarette and assuming the grand manner. "I can't imagine what made you make such a mistake. But I won't be angry this time—I know a man never can tell. That is in New York. Of course, in one's home town, where everybody knows one another's people, it's different. . . . But, in future, please remember I'm not that sort of a girl."

For the moment he had been appalled by her calm assurance. Then, "Just what kind of a girl are you?" he inquired gravely. "You wear beautiful clothes, ride in taxis, don't work, don't get money from home—I've learned that much from things you've said. So

don't be absurd. You can pick out an apartment right off the Park; I'll have the best decorator in town furnish it. And you can have accounts at Madame Ondit's and at Griffony's and anywhere you like. And if we ever separate, I'll hand you a certificate of deposit for anything in reason. Ask anybody about me—they'll tell you I'm dead straight about keeping my promises—"

"If we were only down South," she had interrupted with glacial severity, "my brother would horsewhip you." (She knew her brother had the whip for he worked in a harness store. But he would have been more likely to offer it for sale, and would assuredly have addressed Carleton as "sir." All of which Carleton knew, approximately, by her enunciation and affectations. But he was more amused than angry.)

"Come," he said courteously, "that's no way to talk, little girl. You've accepted my presents; you've encouraged me to make love to you. And even if you were still working in the chorus, you couldn't earn enough to pay for those expensive clothes you're wearing. If it's just your little game, and you've simply worked me for the presents, why, I'll be a good sport and won't complain. But for the love of the Lord, don't start to play cheap melodrama—it isn't a bit nice. What did you suppose I took all this trouble over you for?"

"Oh, for the same reason all you disgusting men do anything," she returned intensely, and put both hands between her knees, staring away into nothingness—after her favorite fashion in fiction.

"Why disgusting?" he persisted. "Why else *should* a man with any brains give little girls like you so much time and money? Surely not to *marry* you. Don't you know that every year there are hundreds of pretty *débutantes* who are bred up to the business of getting married? And they have influential fathers or relatives who can help their husbands to success in their careers—and most of them have their own money so that they aren't a drag on their struggling husbands. Isn't it common sense for a clever man to

marry a girl like that who can help him in every way, instead of an outsider like you who will make him quarrel with all his men friends because their wives won't invite her to their houses? You know how snobbish women are! So you surely have too much sense to think I wanted to marry you, my dear."

"You cad! You bounder!" she choked, in the approved style and in those terms favored by fictionists to describe an utter lack of manhood.

"S-sh!" he warned, for some of the others were looking curiously toward this couple in the corner. "S-sh! . . . Now as to other possible reasons. Could I have been after you because you are a delightfully clever conversationalist? Outside of the usual small talk of the day, can you talk intelligently about anything at all worth while? Take—well, the theater, for instance. I don't mean, 'Isn't Bobbie Burns too cute!' or 'Isn't Jimmy Elvisham just wonderful!' or did I see that piece where the husband chokes his wife to death and do I really think he hurts her—she turns so perfectly ghastly! But that's all the theater of Shakespeare, Schiller and Shaw means to you."

She attempted to cow him with what her favorite novelists called "flashing eyes," failing which, she tried to rise; but he detained her with a strong hand on her shoulder. "I'll give you another chance at showing brilliancy in conversation. Take music. Now don't pretend to adore Wagner because you've got the 'Lohengrin' wedding march and 'The Ride of the Valkyries' on the phonograph. Tell me, instead, the underlying idea of the Ring operas. . . . No? Well, take a third chance—books. Since you left school, have you ever read one that hasn't got a candy box wrapper on it? I'll bet you can't name two characters of Balzac's. I'll bet you don't even know who Stendhal was—or the De Goncourts—or Dostieffsky—or François Villon."

Again she made an unsuccessful attempt to rise; but, again detaining her, he continued calmly: "I'll give

you a fourth chance—painting. What kind of painters were Franz Hals and Albert Dürer—or the Düsseldorf School? And a fifth—philosophy. Who was Locke—or Descartes—and what work is old Plato best known by? Who was Aristotle—Schopenhauer? Why, I'll bet you can't even tell me what A B C Bergson is driving at. As for the history of the world, I suppose you still think Adam and Eve were the first humans, and that everybody was drowned in the flood but the Noah bunch. . . . It didn't make any difference, women not knowing those things, when they were good housewives and superintended their own kitchens and made their own clothes and had a dozen children. But now that you look down on domesticity, you've got to make good at something else. You don't even earn your own living; you haven't any money to make up for it; you have no rare entertaining powers. You have only your looks, and I naturally imagined you lived by them. Don't you?"

"You're a coward, a bully and a low brute," she breathed heavily, repressing with difficulty an overwhelming desire to add that he was also "no gentleman," but the books had warned her that such an accusation was one that delighted low brutes.

He was about to prove, quite plausibly, that she was wrong; but someone broke in with a demand that she cease to monopolize their good-looking host, hence there was no further chance for a private talk until the party broke up and he was helping her on with her wraps.

"I don't want you ever to speak to me again," she said, her voice trembling with anger. What she wanted really was to feel the satisfaction of striking him with her clenched fists. "Never, never, never dare to speak to me again, d'you hear?"

"Don't worry," he returned coldly. "I didn't intend to. I've wasted too much time on you already." And, as she knew this time if she spoke she should scream, he had the satisfaction of the last word.

II

WHERE women are concerned there are two types of men and two only, the ruled and the rulers; and this had been Dearie's first experience with the second type. Until now, she had been intimate only with those nice men, young or old, who, lacking attractions or the wit to manage women, must spend lavishly to gain their good will, must accept what little they choose to give—for there are many more men of their kind than there are pretty women.

Now, despite her anger against Carleton, Miss Davenant could not help but suspect that her easy victories were because she had not heretofore aimed very high. When she had met men at all worth while, they had treated her with a certain amused toleration, and save for Carleton had never sought to make her better acquaintance. And in the bright white light of a humble moment, she half realized that such men did not value her, did not want her—except as Carleton had wanted her.

But you may be sure that such an egotist as Dearie did not for long accept so humiliating an estimate of herself. She argued scornfully that it was merely because she had not cared enough to impress such disagreeable people; that she, on her part, did not value *them*—conceited hateful things! But, because Carleton had challenged her, she would show him. She would cease to be a sparrow hawk and fly at bigger game; would capture someone far superior to Carleton.

But to meet such men, she should seek a new environment to display her charms. Of course, if she continued in the chorus, they would not take her seriously. She must, therefore, adorn the legitimate drama. So next day she dressed herself and sought out Mandelbaum, an intrepid young entrepreneur with whom she had danced on several occasions at tango parties and who had told her that she should come to him whenever she wanted an engagement—a fact that he seemed to have forgotten, for he kept her waiting in the anteroom just like any other unsolicited appli-

cants; and by the time the office boy called her name and nodded to the door marked "Private," she was raging at this new assault on her value.

Mandelbaum was standing at his desk; spread out before him were the plans of a new theater, the proposed cost of a new production, the manuscript of a new play which he must read before nightfall if he wanted to buy the American rights, and piles of unanswered correspondence. Propped up in plain sight was a lengthy list of the day's engagements; in his hand, a dozen professional cards, Dearie's on top. He gave the others to his secretary.

"Tell those people they'll have to write you for appointments." Then, as the door closed: "Well, little one? Fortunately, I remembered that name of yours: it's so odd. . . ." He glanced in a worried way at his engagement list, then, before she could speak, went on: "I really haven't time to talk to you now. I tell you what: I'll get away from here by six thirty, but I have to be at the opening of our new piece to-night. That means off at seven thirty to dress. But we can have a cosy little hour at Jean Garnier's—one of those pretty little private rooms, eh?"

Despite his abstraction, he smiled in prospect; but at the name of Jean Garnier's, Dearie stiffened. "Really, Mr. Mandelbaum," she said coldly, "I don't know you well enough—" But he gave her no time to finish. "Oh," he interrupted—then in a tone quite different: "I suppose you want to get in the chorus of 'The Coquette,' eh? Well, Bob Ledyard's got charge of that. He'll be picking girls tomorrow on the Garden stage. The best-lookers with the best voices get the jobs. Be there at ten o'clock sharp."

And before the astounded Miss Davenant could think of a retort, he had opened the door and had bowed her out. She burned with rage and shame as she hurried from the building. Beasts of men—beasts! She would make them pay for this. Wait until she got the chance on one of them; he should suffer for these Carletons and Mandelbaums.

In this mood she approached the

office of Harlan K. Harney, remembering that he had given the chance to Ida Dare, an unknown youngster, to play the principal part in "The Devonshire Maid." She did not know Mr. Harney, but he was the one manager of whom she had heard the most glowing tales: he was never "fresh" with girls; and, though very nearly the most important producer in town, never denied himself to anyone seeking an interview, no matter how unknown. Thus, when Dearie entered the big offices over his pet theater, the telephone girl pointed to an inner room where handsome, good-natured Harney sat, dictating.

"Go right in," said the girl; and on Dearie following this advice, Harney signed his stenographer to go, and having heard her request for some sort of a chance, handed her a script of a piece about to go into production. "Read Dora's part," he requested, turning to a particular page, then leaned back and closed his eyes.

It was a good part, requiring exceptional prettiness, as Dearie could see from the lines of the character playing opposite, lines that compared Dora to every comparable pulchritudinous object. Such a part would make her, she was sure; so she went at it in that affected flapper English she had learned from hearing other promoted chorus girls play Lady Gwen or the Honorable Gladys.

Harney opened his eyes. "Don't go on, my dear young lady," he said positively, and picked up his correspondence again. "It's a pity, though. You're very pretty. Why won't you pretty girls learn to act? Don't need to—that it? Well, if you really want to learn, I believe there's another part in Ryerson's new piece—a tiny 'bit.' And maybe he could coach you for an understudy." As Dearie did not answer, he added sharply: "Remember I'm very busy— Oh, you *would* like it? Well, report to Mr. Ryerson on this stage at ten thirty tomorrow. Here"—and he scribbled something on her card, gave it back and bowed her out. He had hardly looked at her. The prospect of conquering him was not a very favorable one.

Next morning, when she arrived ten minutes late, Ryerson, the famous "highbrow" actor-manager, intimate of the German giants, apostle of their plays and highly developed type of artist, waved her aside when she would have given him the card. Deep in his rehearsal, he would have no interruption. Only when "Edrica's" cue was called and no Edrica took it up was she permitted to approach him.

"I thought Harney said he had some girl for that 'bit,'" he said to Aveburg, Harney's general director, assisting him in the staging of this, his new starring vehicle. It was then that Dearie had proffered the card again. "Oh—it's you," said Ryerson. "Well, why weren't you here at ten thirty? I was here, Miss Mapes, my leading lady, was here, Mr. Whitechurch was here. But a little unknown girl has to come late! I don't know whether I want you or not. It might happen again. However, I can't be bothered now—so take your cue. Miss Stone—please—" After the rehearsal, he bade her remain.

"Mr. Harney said something about using you as an understudy," he said, when the others had gone. "Well, if that's to be, I must make sure you can play *this* part first. Now I don't expect intelligence, but I do expect you to do as you're told. So let's see if you can do this part once it's been explained to you." He went through her few lines, transforming his voice into that of a very young girl's, giving the cues in other voices, holding her amazed and fascinated; so much so that, when she came to imitate him, she did no better than before.

"Now I tell you what, young woman," he said angrily, flinging down the book, "I'll waste just ten minutes more on you. One more chance, mind!" This time she strained her ears, and when her turn came, acquitted herself creditably. "Why didn't you do that at first?" growled Ryerson, although secretly elated. He knew the power of pretty women to please audiences, and preferred them if possible. "Now that proves you *can* do it if you want to; and don't dare do it any other way hereafter.

Stupidity is a bore, but carelessness is a crime. Ten thirty tomorrow." And off he stalked with no more ado.

III

NATURALLY enough to those who know, while Dearie had hated Carleton for his disdain and would have been delighted to see him dead, the more she suffered from Ryerson, the more she wanted to have him for her own: the difference being that she had admired Ryerson before she had met him and had tacitly admitted his superiority—was he not the foremost American actor of intellectual plays, the favorite of society? Carleton was, so far as she knew, merely a commonplace business man. It is not given to the average woman to examine externals and learn whether they represent what is within: that Carleton in any save a commercial age would have been anything but a business man it was not hers to know. She classed him with other business men who had paid her homage and, not receiving it from him, was enraged. But Ryerson could do super-excellently something that was exceedingly difficult for her to do at all, so that every additional slight from him, every growl, every lack of appreciation of her charms, only increased her respect for his superiority; and, after the first day, she trembled for fear she might lose her part, not for the loss of the tiny income but because, losing it, she also lost the daily sight of him.

For this short period in her life, she was humble. Carleton had opened her eyes to deficiencies of which she had been so long unaware, associating as she did only with male sparrows and female sparrow hawks. She had come from a small Southern town where all the worth-while men went North, at least as far as Baltimore. Consequently, with the remaining ones—hewers of wood and drawers of soda water: the young yokels and young clerks—she had easily maintained a capricious belleship. Coming to New York in the wake of another "young Southern so-

ciety woman"—as the press agent billed them—she found a place in the show-girl ranks ready for her, her friend having shown her picture to a manager whose advertisements of the pulchritude of his chorus had saved many a bad show from congestion of the ticket rack.

This manager's attractions were what are called "Johnnie shows," patronized heavily by friends and acquaintances of the female personnel—or by those who came hoping for acquaintance. At his theater, many gilded youths bought seats for the season, and were to be found in the boxes or the front row every night at certain hours, frequently bringing with them parties of friends to point out "my girl—there—second from the end." The manager was ensured against failure by farming out stock to such as these—which gave them the privileges of the "back drop" and the wings. Even the general audience was composed mostly of very young or very old men who saved their programmes, and, though they failed to meet any of the girls, memorized their names, bought their pictures and pretended acquaintance with them when home again in Kennebunkport or Oskaloosa; while the most sophisticated of rounders drew freely upon the chorus for female supper companions.

So that the manager chose his girls with an eye to youth and beauty, caring little whether they could sing or dance. He had special singers in the back rows or in the wings and pony ballets for that. He treated his beauties with the same courtesy he used toward the wealthy patrons they brought him—himself officiating at the introductions when requested; and, as he was the most complete edition of "Who's Who in Wall Street," often possessing information unknown to Dun and Bradstreet, the girls knew, if he did so officiate, that the fiscal rating of the candidate for friendship was beyond suspicion.

These girls were divided into three classes: first, those who already by hook or crook possessed chauffeurs, charge accounts and charming apartments; second, those willing to go to any end to possess them; third, "sparrow hawks"

(or salamanders) whose idea it was that it was better to wait for more permanent prospects—otherwise marriage. These, until "Mr. Right" came along, were willing to take anything they could get provided you showed them "the respect you would show your own sister."

By the time rehearsals ceased and the show took to the road, Dearie Davenant had set herself to attract the notice of Ryerson; beginning at the very first minute of their journey, when by dexterity in the disposition of hand luggage—having her porter follow Ryerson's into the Pullman and place her bags nearest to his—she managed to exchange seats with the actor holding the one she desired, claiming petulantly that it was so much trouble to move "all that stuff—oh, that stupid porter!"

Thus she commanded a sight of all the exits and entrances of Ryerson into his drawing room compartment; and, as the town where they were to open was a ten-hour journey away, Ryerson, in all those hours of ease, could not fail to admire so pretty a face when placed so provokingly near—she knew that much was true of herself.

And she was right. Before three hours had passed, Ryerson, tired of reading, had noticed her more than once: had noticed also her welcoming smile; had finally descended to the usual device of pretending some business reason for speaking to her, in this case a request that she would remain in her costume in the wings until the end of the last act so that she could take the "company call" with the others. Once she was in his drawing room, it was but courtesy to offer her a seat; and once seated, both Ryerson and herself were determined she should stay seated.

He was as bold a wooer as he was an artist. In producing a play, he cared very little whether it pleased the public so long as he was satisfied it was good art—which was why his inferiors waxed wealthy and he remained poor. So with women—he cared very little whether they liked his way of wooing. If they objected, he did not want them. But they seldom objected, for Ryerson always waited for them to make the

advances. "If a woman really wants you, she'll soon let you know," as he often put it himself.

From the first moment in his drawing room, Dearie Davenant made it evident that she wanted him.

IV

BUT it was not to be expected of Dearie that her temporary humility would remain permanent. She had overvalued herself too long. But, for a few months during the tour of the piece, her beauty sufficed to keep Ryerson devoted; and, being away from New York and his own circle, having only to play his part each night, having neither business worries nor rehearsals, he was able to give her most of his time. They attended vaudeville matinees, went to suppers in gay restaurants, took long drives; often, when the "jumps" were short, motored from town to town. And he labored with her, instructing her in the part she had originally read for Harney and into which she was to be promoted when the piece neared New York; Ryerson (who was a very just man) agreeing to pay the other actress her salary until she got another engagement elsewhere.

Now had Dearie Davenant been wise, she had it in her hands to weave chains about Ryerson that he would never have had the courage to break; and, though temporarily infatuated with other pretty faces, he would have carefully concealed such affairs from her. Such men are extraordinarily tender-hearted where weaker creatures are concerned, also extraordinarily domestic in the larger sense; that is to say, they like to have a home to which they can return after their wanderings to find the fire lit, the slippers ready, favorite pipes and books near at hand. Dearie had it in her power to take her place in this home, had she conquered her self-love and studied his interests and his comfort, made herself such a necessity to him that in time Ryerson would have married her.

If women only knew it, their best

weapon against strong men is their weakness; just as with weak men it is their strength. To win Ryerson at first, she had followed tactics which she should have had the wit to continue until her conquest was permanent. Ryerson, in face of continued sweetness of disposition, would have reproached himself more bitterly for neglect or infidelity than she could have done; self-reproach that each time would have strengthened her own position. Even if she had been only a mercenary woman playing a game, these tactics would have been the best—for after marriage, if she chose to turn nasty, she might still have lost him, but at least a life income would have been assured her.

But when the piece opened in New York to the usual first night enthusiasm and half-hearted attendance thereafter, Dearie showed herself unable to understand what was best for them both. She was not even tolerant of that social diplomacy which Ryerson had found necessary to prolong the New York run of any play that appealed principally to the intellect. Since the general public preferred rapid fire farces in which American ignorance was glorified and foreigners were pictured either as villains or comic characters, Ryerson must look to society to make his ventures even possible, and must attend functions where his presence aroused interest in his personality and brought thousands of dollars from box parties, matinees for eager débutantes, and the general patronage of the "smart push."

Then, too, Ryerson was one of a very small group of intellectuals who met often to discuss art in letters and in the drama. And, besides, it was with him a point of honor to give special performances of striking one-act plays of literary value and fragments of unusual verse plays, poetic as well as dramatic; making up bills that stood no possible chance of any financial returns under ordinary circumstances, but that were useful to his mind in realizing for brief moments his dream of classic days. And these paid for themselves when done under the auspices of some "worthy charity" or as part of a "benefit," or backed by a

"League" or some other literary or dramatic "uplift" whose members numbered among them sufficient wealthy women to finance purely artistic successes.

All of which took him away from Dearie, and Dearie first protested, then by rapid stages became tearful, whining, grumbling, jealous, reproachful, bitter, quarrelsome—unbearable. And all this when he came to her body-weary and brain-fagged. He didn't care enough for her or he'd find a way to be with her more. Was she going to waste the best years of her life on a man who didn't appreciate her sacrifice? Did he think she wasn't *good enough* to introduce to his society friends? Fine society! Why, down in *her part of the country*, the *old families* wouldn't be caught dead in his wonderful *New York* society. *Society*—bah! As for his artistic friends—why, she had to laugh at *those freaks*! Why, if *her mother* heard the way they talked in front of women, she would rise up out of her grave to think her daughter was present. Her mother—the mention of whom was always the cue for copious tears.

But it was her daughter's own fault. They wouldn't talk that way in front of any women they really *respected*—their *sisters*—or *wives*. *Wives*, that was it! If she was his *wife*, he wouldn't *allow* them to talk that way in front of her. . . .

"Let me show you the fallacy of your argument," he had said wearily. "From all this, it appears you don't wish to know these friends of mine. Then all this argument is because I don't *force* you to know them?"

But she was superior to anything so narrow as logic. "It's the thought that you *prefer* such people to *me*," she had returned. "It only shows how cheap you hold me because you know I love you!"

Her talks with him soon degenerated into mere accusations of clandestine affairs with any woman whose invitations he might accept or who might exert herself to bring about additional patronage that would help prevent the play from losing money. All of which was prolonged to so tiresome a degree

that, after many threats, he finally carried one into effect and remained away from her for three days running, refusing to answer her frantic telephoning. This she considered so triumphant a vindication of her suspicions that at first she forgot that her heart was broken.

But on the third night she remembered and hurried to his apartment, precipitating a violent scene; her screams so piercing that they provoked poundings on the walls and floors from neighboring bachelors. She swore she would kill herself.

And tomorrow they would find the letter in which she explained the reason for her rash deed: the old story—love betrayed—mentioning the guilty man. At which Ryerson became, for the moment, clay in her hands; for he saw his name in the headlines, his theater empty on the morrow, himself thereafter banished to the provinces.

Not that he had any fear she would really kill herself. He knew the trick. The man, if well known, had everything to lose, the girl everything to gain. She would swallow only sufficient of some weak poison to get her name into the papers and be interviewed by the "human interest" females of the daily yellows, the "sob squad," whose business it is, not to get news, but to manufacture from it the same stories their readers applaud loudest at the "movies," among which none surpasses the ruin of a poor working girl by a rich, heartless man, his subsequent desertion and the betrayed one's death rather than dishonor. Which, in the case of one as well known as Ryerson, would give her sufficient notoriety for a well paid vaudeville engagement.

In face of this possible prospect, not daring to take the chance of weary years in the hinterlands, he admitted temporary defeat. But her self-gratification at her victory made her too swollen with pride to realize that he was merely imitating her tactics and using the art of acting when he professed suddenly to realize that he had not known how much he really loved her until he thought of losing her—"that way."

"I'd never forgive myself! I'd never have another happy day!" he finished wildly, and remembering the "business" that went with this old-time dialogue, he "crushed her to him," half sobbing: "My little girl, oh, my own little girl!" . . .

She almost purred her satisfaction. After all, he was like all other men. You mustn't let them have their own way too much. In the future she would see to it that he didn't.

V

ALL of which was very short-sighted policy on her part. Now that she had shown her claws, had thrown down woman's weapons for man's, her only hold on him was lost. She was henceforth to be regarded in the light of a vicious enemy, and while she was gloating over the success of her stratagem, and presuming upon it to make her former requests imperious commands, changing her complaints to bold threats of disgrace if she found him untrue, he, stripped of his loyalty and chafing in his chains, was seeing her for the first time as she was: a weak-brained little butterfly made dangerous by excessive conceit of herself; and, since she exacted so high a payment for her commonplace charms, worthless. His contempt for himself at having allowed his own egotism to suppose her capable of any deep devotion only made his dislike for her the greater.

He finally resolved to rid himself of her by begging Harney to offer her a larger part in a play intended for a Chicago opening, to which city it had been announced that Ryerson's piece would be transferred on a date only a few weeks distant. But Ryerson had no intention of going there, having recently read a most remarkable manuscript, one that combined with the promise of popularity the virtues of classic comedy. Enjoining secrecy upon Harney, he had persuaded that good-natured manager to give him the chance to prolong his season; but gave his company no inkling of a change of vehicle until Dearie had

departed with double salary—paid in part by him—and the assurance that he would be in Chicago by the time her piece quitted the road and its two weeks' "tryout." And, as she had stepped into a part vacated by illness, the delay was only for a few days.

Yet, even when Ryerson's rehearsals began, he kept them a secret from the public until the last possible moment; and, when his change of plan was finally announced, Dearie would have already spent two weeks on the road and would be in some sort accustomed to the separation. Then, when Ryerson explained by long distance, he pretended great distress, claiming that he remained only as a favor to Harney, who must otherwise close his theater and lose heavily, the attraction intended to follow having failed disastrously. But *she* was not to worry. If this new piece caught on—which seemed incredible—he would soon have her back in New York. Meanwhile, she must remain in her part, for, if she abandoned it, Harney would never allow even Ryerson to cast her again—didn't she know it was one of Harney's principles to blacklist any performer who left him in the lurch? Well, it was. And then he (Harney) was so pleased with her portrayal of so subtle a character as Linette: it would not be easy to replace her.

Thus, every other day or so, did Ryerson add to the income of the telephone trust. He was far too clever to write letters that might be used against him. But, without evidences in writing, or, as in New York, worse, the fact that the hallboys and elevator man had seen him on his visits to her—she was helpless to hurt him, suicide or not. And the longer he lengthened their amicable separation, the more she would realize this helplessness. "A tragedy postponed for a month becomes a farce," he had said apropos of this to his best friend, to whom he had told his trials, and who accused him, immediately and indignantly, of brutality.

"Quite right," Ryerson agreed. "Brutality in the strong is the only match for low cunning in the weak, and we strong people make an absurd mis-

take in not using it oftener. Give a weakling his or her own way once too often and they mess up their own affairs and everybody's connected with them. Look at the horrible results of being too merciful with a mob, for instance—which is a collection of weaklings. If the soldiers had the brutality to fire on them at the first offense, the mob would disperse and go home howling. But let them get a taste of triumph and they get drunk with it—beat out babies' brains—batter down churches—kill friends as well as foes. Same way with this girl. Since I let her get away with that suicide threat, she was twice as jealous and twice as threatening. She would have landed me in a fine scandal if I hadn't got rid of her. Yes, old boy, when women start fighting foul, we've got to be brutal. I wonder how she takes it when I stop telephoning and she finds I'm through with her?"

It was just as well he realized that she was capable only of melodrama, not of tragedy. But he might have saved himself the small fortune he spent on long-distance calls to Chicago, for she had not waited for him to break off with her before returning to the more congenial role of sparrow hawk (miscalled salamander) and had begun to take her vengeance upon the sex for Ryerson's under-valuation of her.

Ryerson, with his pretended solicitude on the telephone, was her unconscious assistant in the capture of Archie Altman, author of the novel from which the piece in which she was playing had been dramatized.

VI

It is not surprising that, when young Archie Altman fell violently in love with her, she enjoyed inventing any number of ingenious ways that, while causing him to suffer horribly, restored to her that confidence in her self-esteem of which Ryerson had robbed her. For was not Archie as distinguished as Ryerson, and nearly as well known?

As a matter of fact, he was neither, being one of those freaks of luck who

invade the stage occasionally with an idea so ancient that experienced dramatists have not dared to use it for many years. But, it being a well known fact that the cheaper or more childlike the idea, the more the public will like it if it is sufficiently well dressed in modern clothes, the dramatization of Archie's novel, though ridiculed by the few intelligent critics, had done what Harney had predicted, and had scored a hit of such colossal proportions that the manager was planning to organize four more companies.

Meanwhile Dearie had realized how much more pleasant it was to be loved than to love. For the slight intoxication of an hour with Ryerson now and then, she had spent days of hating herself and him; while with Archie she was in a continual whirl of triumph, everywhere exhibiting her distinguished captive bound to her chariot wheels, the envy of other sparrow hawks and the admiration of their male partners.

It had helped Dearie Davenant considerably that young Mr. Altman, after a few days of rehearsals, had found everything theatrical so disillusioning to one of his romantic ignorance of life that he had determined gloomily to write a novel of the theater, which should warn young girls to beware before they entered a life where womanhood, sacred womanhood, was often sworn at for stupidity by cigar-chewing stage directors, where men kept on their hats and removed coats and even collars while in their company and talked in their hearing of subjects that such men as Archie chuckled over in smoking rooms.

Archie had lived all his life amid the hypocrisies of a small town; hence his novelettes for the women's magazines were in such demand that he wrote under half a dozen names; but always he had intended to do a "big novel" some day; and now he could see his women readers thrilling at the insults to his heroine, a pure young girl whose beauty had taken her to the stage and who, pursued and tempted by men of wealth and influence, must choose between honor and fame—a piece of relentless realism such as

would receive enthusiastic critical encomiums as well as popular praise.

Therefore he congratulated himself on his luck when, just as he was beginning to plan the plot of it, he should find in his own company the same wonderfully brave little girl he had imagined, Miss Adeara Davenant, whose life was the novel. What she had gone through! Ah! A young lady in whose veins flowed the blood of those Cavaliers and Huguenots who had made her Southern land a synonym for gallant men and fair women! Educated at a school where the richest of the Reconstruction parvenus tried in vain to introduce their daughters! Compelled by domestic tragedy to hide herself in a big city where her name meant nothing, and where blackguardly men, little knowing that they insulted one of such lineage, had pursued her unchastely.

As for the famous men who had pursued her, he was the first famous man she had met who was not an insufferable egotist and who was also a gentleman, one who understood birth and breeding when he met with it even if it were on the stage. Most famous men did not. That was why she was forced in all previous cases to leave word that she was not in whenever they called. And how they *did* call—by telephone, letter, messenger, in person or by proxies bearing presents—of course if they were other than books or flowers or candy, she promptly returned them. The jewelry she had sent back! One gathered that she had rejected sufficient gifts of this description to cause Griffony's front window to resemble an exhibit of earthenware. . . . And speaking of famous men, there was Ryerson, for instance. Oh, yes, *the* Ryerson. He would be in Chicago soon, and she was wondering how she could avoid him: he was so persistent; think of calling her up by long-distance every day!

It was with special design that she had introduced Ryerson's name that day at tea in her own hotel, having previously instructed the telephone clerk, if there were any calls for her, that she would be somewhere in the hotel and should be "paged." And then just half

an hour previous to the time Ryerson generally telephoned, she had begun to tell of the Ryerson persecutions. . . . She was afraid he would wear her out: that finally he would force her to consent to marry him through sheer weariness.

"Miss Davenant—call for Miss Davenant," droned a bellboy, wandering into the lounge, bringing to Miss Davenant's face a look of resignation. "See who it is, that's a dear boy," she requested of Archie. And as Archie went off, only too willingly, she smiled. If this did not bring an immediate proposal, then she was wasting her time. The sight of his sulky face on returning with the expected information made her sure she was far from wasting it.

"That's seven times since I've been in Chicago," she grumbled. "You see what I told you"—and departed, to remain away half an hour, although the call hardly consumed a fifth of that time.

It was a powerful card Ryerson had unwittingly given her to play. Young Archie was new to the squandering of money; and the appalling amount that oft-repeated half-hour conversations with Chicago cost gave him no doubt of the fierce affection of the actor manager, beside the illumination of whose solid fame and social success Altman's ephemeral popularity was but as a penny tal-low dip to a gross of church candles. . . . And this great man would soon be in Chicago; he who could give the wonderful woman they both loved a position, socially and theatrically, that far outclassed anything a young author could offer. Therefore it behooved said author to make frantic haste, overcoming his fear that, if he was precipitate, she would refuse him because she did not know him well enough; for now he had a *chance*, at any rate. But if he waited for his famous rival to return to the field, he would be contemplating self-destruction on the shore of Lake Michigan while the happy pair dined luxuriously on Michigan Boulevard.

Miss Davenant had counted on such gloomy thoughts, hence had thoughtfully given him time to indulge them. Returning, she shrugged her shoulders

and spread her palms. "Imagine the money he wastes. And it's positively no use." She sank down beside Altman; for a moment he breathed what he had often written as "the perfume of her presence." "How he worries me!" she went on wearily. "Says I'm responsible for the falling-off in his work—as if it was my fault if I can't love him. And as well as he knows I can't, he's cutting short his New York season—think of it!—and coming out here just because—oh, it's too absurd."

But it didn't seem so absurd to young Archie. "So that's why you always have to be at your hotel at five thirty—to answer his calls. I guess, if you didn't care something for him, you wouldn't be here."

"Foolish boy! I'm *sorry* for him, that's all," she said in a tone that fanned his fever into a fury. "You surely wouldn't want me to be hard-hearted, would you? Why should I *hurt* him when it's just as easy to *be* here? I can't be hard-hearted with *anybody*," she added, and, as Archie read in this a meaning for himself, a sudden groan escaped him and he groped blindly for his hat and stick. So it was true, after all—he had been merely tolerated because she did not wish to hurt him, and she was warning him now not to add to her worries!

In sudden alarm, Dearie realized that the provocative method must be abandoned—that she had wasted much fine Italian handiwork upon a species supposed to be extinct—in the cities, at least; the intellectual enigma who does not need to be persuaded that woman is the fleeing fawn, man the hardy hunter. With such, the fawn must cease to flee. Hence Archie found her hand where his hat ought to be; and, "Archie," she murmured softly, "Archie dear, you aren't jealous of *him*, are you?"

He looked at her as one in a dream. "My God—you *care*—you *do* care—for *me*?" he said, and it required some stoicism not to break the spell by withdrawing her hand from the grip that hurt—the approved method of expressing an emotion too sacred for speech. . . .

THE BRAGGART

By Helene Esberg

THE eternal trio is still interesting in so far as its members, as individuals, are so. One such group dined at Charlan's, at the corner of the little known street of Paris in which the three lived.

Legrange, the husband of the woman, was said to be a painter of portraits. He was about thirty years old, very big, with a shock of black hair which he combed back off his forehead, and remarkably white, even teeth. There belonged to him a peculiar air of diffuseness, noticeable, in some subtle way, even before one listened to his conversation. His wife was slim and young, with fine, clearly cut features. She dressed her hair simply and her person in a loose, trailing fashion that added grace and dignity to a carriage, which, for so young a woman, was remarkable in its poise. Her mouth was often sad, and her eyes, long and gray, held something inscrutable, something rather bitter, which did not fit with the madonna-like contour of her face and head. Although Poix, who was a sculptor, had known the couple but for the year that their studios had been adjacent, he had in that time grown to be their frequent companion. Judged in the light of those of his works which had already been widely exhibited, he was a man of big ideas and big emotions, and though he talked little about his own affairs, much more was definitely known about his work than about that of Legrange.

It was a spring evening and the three were sitting long over their coffee. Poix, twirling the waxed ends of his mustache, was inclined to silence. Madame Legrange, too, appeared preoccupied. Only

Legrange talked in a lively and continuous stream, his deep voice and frequent gestures adding color to the glowing description of a face which, seen in the crowded Bois, had caught his fancy and filled him with the desire to paint it. He suddenly interrupted himself to point out a man who was about to sit down at a table in the opposite corner of the room.

"There's your friend Muret," he said to Poix. "All alone. Not even celebrating his success at yesterday's exhibition."

"Ah, yes. I should like to talk with him for a moment. You will excuse me?" and Poix threaded his way across the room between the tables.

For a moment there was silence between Legrange and his wife. Then he broke out:

"Will you tell me what Poix sees in that upstart Muret? It doesn't seem like him to make a fuss about the fellow just because he's been having something of a success."

"No," said his wife, "that couldn't be his reason."

"But just see here," Legrange continued: "Muret and I studied together ten years ago. My work was much bigger than his, yet you never hear Poix professing any great interest in what I do."

"Maybe he is not of the opinion that your work is the better," she said quietly.

Her husband flushed darkly.

"Then he has no judgment," he said.

"It is ridiculous even to compare me with these little Murets and the like, who flare up like Roman candles on the horizon of the painters of Paris, and as quickly fade. What have I in common

with their narrow successes? It is but to be expected that big capabilities require time and mature growth in order to produce worthy work. Poix, however, has little faith in my work. I feel that."

"You have done practically nothing since we've moved here, you must remember," she said.

"What has that to do with it? Why can't people see by a man's ideas, his conceptions, whether or not he is great? Must there be little, concrete witnesses to prove it? Muret never had nor ever will have my breadth of conception, my—"

At this point Poix resumed his seat.

"Muret has just completed a little *genre* picture," he said.

"You admire him?" Madame Legrange asked.

"I do."

"What for?" demanded Legrange. "Are his ideas lofty? Are his viewpoints original? No? Then what do you see in him? I have often wondered."

"I like his modesty," said Poix slowly. "It is always a refreshing—experience. He is quite young and quite successful, yet he never talks much about his work. In that way he is a good man to study and to imitate. A little greater modesty might do us all good. What do you say, Legrange?"

Madame Legrange looked at Poix out of the corners of her eyes.

"You evidently dislike boastful people," she said, before Legrange could answer.

"I do," he replied. "Have I never before had occasion to say so?"

"No."

"And you, madame," he continued, "you surely prefer those who do not sing their own praises, to the braggarts, do you not?"

She avoided his direct gaze.

"Oh, I have never had occasion really to think about boastfulness," she said.

"Sometimes," said Poix, "we fail to think only because we do not allow ourselves to do so. That is often a good thing, I should say."

"Sometimes, too, a bad one," she replied, with a suggestion of bitterness in her voice.

"I believe your wife must mean," said

Poix to Legrange, "that we sometimes permit ourselves to be, for a time, what the Americans call 'bluffed'—eh, Legrange?"

"Oh, not if one has one's eyes open," said Legrange as he puffed at his cigarette.

Madame Legrange sat quite silent, looking straight before her.

"Sometimes people see through the lens of the eyes of others," she then said, in a low tone.

"Of those they love, for example," added Poix, looking keenly at her. "But when those other lenses are, for some reason, outgrown—" He shrugged his shoulders.

"What foolish talk!" said she lightly, although her face had paled. "Come, Pierre, it is time to be going."

One evening, a week later, Poix entered Legrange's apartment. Legrange was seated in a lounging chair, smoking. As Poix entered, he flicked the ashes off the end of his cigarette.

"I judge," said Poix, "by the way you are disfiguring madame's floor with your ashes, that she is not in evidence this evening."

"No, she is so easily tired in the spring-time. She has gone to her room. And where have you been all these days? You've never before deserted us for so long."

"Oh, I've been busy." Poix wandered to the window, where he drummed listlessly on the pane.

"Have one?" asked Legrange, tendering his box of cigarettes.

"No, thanks."

"What's the matter with you tonight?" asked Legrange. "Spring gotten into your blood, too, eh? I tell you, you people have no vitality. Now the spring never wears me out. Nothing like having endurance. When I was a boy in the Lycée my endurance used to arouse a great deal of comment. One day I remember—"

"I recollect your telling about that," Poix interrupted hurriedly. "Since we are only two this evening, suppose we have a game of chess."

Legrange acquiescing, the game was begun.

At ten o'clock Poix rose to go.

"What, so soon?" asked Legrange.
"You never leave so early as this."

"No, not generally. Very well, then, a few minutes more. I must be up early tomorrow, however, to finish my figure."

"Something new?"

"I've been working at it, on and off, for the past few months."

"By the way, how does this idea of mine strike you?" asked Legrange. "It's the biggest I've had yet. In fact, it's taken hold of me to such an extent that I'm putting aside all of the others I had in mind. And that, of course, is a colossal sacrifice. Would you—"

"I probably sha'n't see it," said Poix, "because I intend leaving Paris within the week. Perhaps in two days."

"Leaving Paris! So suddenly?"

"It's not really sudden. I've been considering it for some time. And now I've made up my mind."

"Any definite plans?"

"None—just the desire to get away."

"Perhaps it's a feminine magnet that's drawing you," said Legrange with a chuckle. "Eh, Poix?"

"Not exactly," said Poix, "although I can't say that the feminine element is lacking."

"Now, don't let the ladies get hold of you, old man. Take my advice; just look at my own case. From the time I was a boy, long before any woman meant anything to me, I had big ideas. I saw life through clear eyes; there was nothing to hinder my inspiration. My mind, strong and free, soared above that of my companions. . . ."

"Do you know, Legrange," Poix interrupted, turning from the window with a movement of impatience, "since your wife is absent, I must say something. It's this: You have the most astounding fashion of praising your own work and your own capabilities that—"

"And why shouldn't I?" Legrange asked hotly, jumping to his feet. "Modesty, my dear Poix, is for the puny and small-minded. Your Murets and the like may be modest. Indeed, they should be so. But was Dante modest? Read the 'Divina Commedia'! Was Andrea modest? That is my answer. Let

modesty go with talent. Genius has no need of it."

His arms were extended in a dramatic gesture; his face was flushed. With the last words he sank heavily back into his chair, a look of exalted satisfaction upon his face.

Poix gazed at him in amazement.

"You don't mean to say," he said, incredulously, "that you are naming yourself in the category with genius? My dear Legrange, you had better wake up." He laughed lightly.

Legrange smiled.

"You will see for yourself some day," he said with a patronizing air. "I cannot expect you to see now. You have not the true vision. Still it is no matter." He smiled again.

"And now," he went on, "to return to the subject, the influence on our work of women: It's an exploded theory, this idea that feminine influence brings out the best in a man. Once I, too, had those foolish notions. That was before I married. Since then I have learned that these women do not enter in. They cannot appreciate us, nor comprehend us, nor sympathize with us. They cannot. Their minds and souls are too small. Perhaps, for the average man, they suffice. As to that, I cannot tell. But not for me. Even when they love us. Take my wife—a charming enough little body—but quite incapable—"

"Quiet!" cried Poix, rising to his feet, his arm extended in a threatening gesture. "Quiet, I say! How dare you criticize your wife to me?"

"What's that you say?" Legrange demanded. "How dare I! What right—" He choked with rage, shaking his fist in the air.

Poix's flushed face paled. He let his upraised arm fall.

"I have no right," he said in a low tone. "No right." Then he suddenly threw back his head with a reckless gesture. "But I don't care whether I have or not," he cried. "I've stood your nauseating bragging all these months. That's been hard enough. But when you begin to talk about a woman—and such a woman—by heaven, it's more than decency can permit! Why, you

bragging dolt, you're married to the most charming, lovable—"

"Stop right there!" Legrange belated. "You need go no further. I see it all. So it's my wife! That's why you've been coming here all these months! Silence!" he thundered, as Poix tried to interrupt. "So I sicken you, do I? Wait! I'll sicken you a bit more before I've done with you! You, in love with my wife!"

"Lower your voice," said Poix, in a deep tone that shook with emotion. "Now listen to the truth. I *am* in love with your wife."

"Ah, you—"

"Silence, I say. She knows nothing of it. I should have gone long ago. But I was not so weak as to let her suspect. I caught myself, not long ago, getting near the danger line. So I'm going. That is all. I have no desire to mar anyone's life."

"You—do you dare to think you could mar my life?" Legrange screamed. "Why, you insolent dog, do you think for one moment that you could come between me and any woman? The woman adores me! Me! She adores me! Do you understand?"

Legrange stopped, out of breath. He was shaking with rage.

Poix was silent for a moment. Then he said slowly:

"I believe she must have adored you, when you married her. You fooled her beautifully. I can see that. Poor little woman! Poor—"

"Poor little woman! Wait!" Legrange cried. "Wait! I will give you an object lesson. You shall see!"

Striding across the room, he threw open the door.

"Emilie!" he called loudly. "Emilie, come here. Come at once."

"What are you trying to do?" Poix said fiercely. "Are you out of your mind?"

Legrange laughed aloud.

"Wait," he said; "I'll teach you!"

Poix's hands dropped. His face was ashen, but he threw up his head as though prepared for whatever might come. The two men waited. Soon a light step was heard. In another mo-

ment Madame Legrange entered the room.

She was dressed in a loose robe of a delicate blue and her hair hung in a thick braid. Poix stared at her with a hunger in his eyes which he could not conceal. She paled under his gaze.

"What is it?" she asked him. Before he could speak, her husband said sharply:

"Emilie, do not be shocked at what you are about to hear. Monsieur Poix, here, has the sublime insolence to be in love with you. I do not wonder that you start. In love with my wife! Emilie, we must teach the fellow a lesson."

He turned to Poix, without noticing that his wife was swaying as though about to faint. "If, at this moment, I am less than all in the world to my wife, I give her leave honorably to depart from here this very night. With you, if she so choose. Alone, if she prefer."

He bowed magnificently.

"I hand her over to you, monsieur," he said. "She is yours—if she so choose."

There was absolute silence in the room. Madame Legrange was already recovering from the shock of her husband's announcement.

"This," said Legrange grandiloquently, "is how sure I am of the love a woman can feel for me!"

He looked at Poix with triumph in his eyes. Then he turned to his wife.

"Tell him, Emilie," he said encouragingly. "You need not be afraid. I am here. Show him what a fool he has made of himself."

Poix remained perfectly quiet, his eyes fixed on Madame Legrange's bowed head. At last he said in a low, halting tone:

"I would have spared you this knowledge. Now I can only beg your pardon."

At his words Madame Legrange raised her head. She put out her hand in protest.

"No," she said distinctly. Then she turned to her husband.

"For once, I thank God that you are a braggart," she said.

Then she turned to Poix.

"I am ready," she said. "Let us go."
 She slipped her hand through his arm. He was trembling from head to foot. With a great effort he controlled himself. Together they left the room.

Some months later, Pierre Legrange and a pretty red-haired girl were seated together at a table in Charlan's. Legrange was talking steadily, his handsome eyes flashing, his beautiful hands eloquent. The girl looked at him with adoring eyes and hung upon his words.

"No, you are wrong in your supposition," he was saying. "She was not a small creature. If she had been, I should not have married her in the first place. No," he went on after a pause, "it was just because she was not big enough. A bigger soul than the average woman—but yet not big enough."

The girl leaned forward.

"And she really cared more for the other man?" she asked incredulously.

"How could it have been so?"

"It could not have been otherwise," he said with a smile. "My dear Aline, you do not know me yet!"

"I am afraid I do not understand," she said. "There are such queer tales. Arend says you came tearing into his studio, beside yourself, crying that your wife had just gone with another man because you had said she might do so. He says you were evidently caught in a trap of your own setting. And he—he laughs a good deal—and jokes—at your expense. I hate it."

"You need not, my dear," he an-

swered. "I shall tell you the story—since you are the only one to whom I wish to tell it. But you must not discuss it with Arend or the others. For the sake of the woman who was my wife, I bear the brunt of their ridicule." He waved his hand like a statesman delivering a political speech.

"Listen," he continued. "It was this way. I had long felt myself hampered by being linked to a woman like my wife—a superior woman, as I have said—but yet insufficient—quite insufficient. Well, *mignonne*, I wanted to spare her the pain of my telling her. I would be generous always, especially to your sex. I felt, nevertheless, that there must be an end. *Eh, bien*, I concocted a little scheme.

"This Poix was an attractive chap, as such fellows go. You never met him, because he went out so little. But you could never have cared for him. Well, I laid my plans carefully. I threw Poix and my wife together. I cleverly contrived to inspire him with what, from his puny viewpoint, seemed a great passion for her. In her I sowed the seeds of a similar affection for him. I make myself a monster in their eyes. Oh, a veritable bear! In short, I pull the strings! And, presto, before long I have rid me of an irksome wife; I have at the same time provided for her; and the thing has been done chivalrously, so as to let her think she held the upper hand! Now do you understand?"

"It is not easy to bear, the laughing. But, what would you, *ma chérie*? One must be a gentleman! *Noblesse oblige!*"



HE—What made the minister so disturbed when he began his sermon?

SHE—Why, the hymn, of course. It was: "Christians, seek not yet repose."

That choirmaster possesses the spirit of humor without doubt, for the hymn before the offertory was:

"It is ordained in God's decree
 That man from all he hath must part."



VIRTUE—A sentimental reminiscence.

VILLANELLE OF VISION

By Willard Huntington Wright

THE night she came and stood upon the stair,
Back from the dead, within the fire's glow,
Her eyes were pure and her pale face was fair.

Her silent whispers trembled on the air:
The lilies in her hands swayed to and fro
The night she came and stood upon the stair.

No longer did her dark, deep eyes ensnare,
Nor did her voice entreat me, soft and low—
Her eyes were pure and her pale face was fair.

Once there had been a serpent in her hair,
But it lay dead upon her bosom's snow
The night she came and stood upon the stair.

I loved her as she shone within the glare,
Her sad lips sweetly calling, for I know
Her eyes were pure and her pale face was fair.

I marveled when I saw her standing there,
Knowing her sins—but they were long ago;
The night she came and stood upon the stair
Her eyes were pure and her pale face was fair.



POETS are never good critics. Neither are critics.



THE parents of William Shakespeare never even heard of eugenics.



MAN estimates woman at her best. Woman estimates man at his worst.

STRANGERS

By Sada Cowan

SCENE—*In his office.*
HE—*An unusually fine-looking man.*
SHE—*A young woman of charm.*
The two have just been introduced.

SHE (*protesting*)—But I am not as other women. With me a man *can* be honest.

HE (*not unkindly*)—No woman can bear honesty.

SHE—How do you know? Have you ever tried giving it?

HE—Often. Disastrously.

SHE—Then you have been unfortunate in your choice of women.

HE (*looking at her sharply—not on account of her words, but her tone, which says so plainly, "You should know me"*)—Um!

SHE (*defiantly*)—I expect honesty in a man. I demand it; that is to say—from my friends.

HE (*not sarcastically*)—Friends?

SHE—Lovers, if you like.

HE (*to himself*)—She added mentally then: "See how frank I am. Few women in my position would make this confession."

SHE (*unconscious of what is going on in his mind*)—And what is more, I give honesty in return.

(*He smiles, somewhat patronizingly.*)

SHE—I do—truly.

(*Now he laughs.*)

SHE (*appealingly*)—You don't believe me?

HE—I believe that you mean what you say. Only you don't know. No woman is truly honest.

SHE (*with a low cry*)—Oh, don't! It hurts to hear you say that. You don't really think it?

HE—Indeed I do, dear lady.

SHE—But what you say isn't fair to woman. Many women long to be honest. Only they don't dare. There are few men to whom one can tell the truth. Forgive the platitude, but "there's one moral code for the man, another for the woman." You know this as well as I.

HE—I'm not thinking of conventional men now, but of men who see life clearly and cleanly; to whom passion is a natural expression of a natural body; men who make no sex distinctions in the passions but give to women the same free path they take themselves. Even with such men women can't be honest. I know. Women have tried to be honest with me, but they couldn't. There's something instinctive in them that won't let them. There's always the desire to hold the man after she has him, to preserve the illusion and the charm; and there's no trick in the world they won't resort to to do it.

SHE—Oh, please, please don't. It isn't true.

HE—Well, what's woman's dress? What's your dress? Trickery. Enticement. The lace across your breast, the close-clinging skirt—

SHE (*flushing and moving uncomfortably, protesting*)—Please!

HE—I thought you could bear honesty.

SHE—So I can, but you embarrass me.

HE—Why should I? If I speak of your hands, your lips, your eyes, you smile and are pleased with me. But the moment . . . Oh— (*He breaks off angrily.*) It's your game, you women! You have to play it just that way, I suppose. But you've made a rotten thing out of sex, a thing you need to blush at and be ashamed of when it's mentioned. It isn't man who has done it, although he gets the blame, but you women who grow crimson when we say things you think we ought not to have said; yet you gloat inwardly when you see the desire in our eyes. It's all right for a man to feel the sex attraction of your presence; it's what you want, what—consciously or unconsciously—you are eternally playing for. But he mustn't tell you of it. He must hide it with lies and conventionalities or he insults you women.

SHE—I can't explain what I feel—but . . .

HE—I can. It's cowardice.

SHE (*gently*)—Perhaps it's modesty.

HE (*brutally*)—What is modesty but cowardice?

SHE (*misunderstanding*)—I'm not afraid of you. It isn't that.

HE (*seeing that she will never grasp the deeper truth, he meets her on her own plane of intelligence*)—You are afraid. (*He takes her hands.*) Look at me!

(*She does so.*)

HE—You haven't the courage to say the thing you feel.

(*She tries to free herself.*)

HE—You don't dare to say to me: "I have never seen you before. I know nothing of you. Only this I know . . . (*He bends closer to her.*) . . . I want you."

SHE (*wrenching her hand away*)—Oh—how dare you?

HE—Where's your honesty, woman?

(*She stands tense.*)

HE—It fails you now, doesn't it? It always fails a woman when it comes to the test. (*His mood changes.*) For a moment I believed you. I thought you were different from all the others. But I don't want you now, I wouldn't have you near me. (*He opens the door.*) Go. Go home! If I gave you a chance you'd make me repent my words. Oh, I know just how you'd do it. But you can't. I loathe that degrading, cheapening love game, where woman tantalizes and withholds solely to lead a man on. You can't do it with me. Only spontaneous mutual desire is worthy of human beings.

Go! Go home! But never try to tell yourself again that you're honest. Only your eyes were honest. All the rest of you lied.



ANYBODY can go to heaven on a tombstone.



SOME people are like wheelbarrows—they don't go unless they are pushed.

THE MARGRAVINE MAN EATER

By Inez Haynes Gillmore

"MISS LORD, let me introduce Mr. Wardwell," said the Rev. Hiram Willoughby, pausing at the end of the hotel piazza. "Mr. Wardwell is new both to the Margravine and to Cowassett. I caught him red-handed in the act of registering."

Mr. Wardwell (he is the man in this story) bowed and murmured something. His face changed perceptibly in expression—his eyebrows flew up and his eyes clung to Miss Lord.

It was easy for the human eye to cling to Miss Lord. She was a jet and bronze, rose and snow brunette. Her hair and eyes contributed the jet to this color combination, her skin the bronze, her lips the rose and her teeth the snow. She was slender and supple. She had evidently just dressed for dinner. She wore white—a thin stuff that floated and foamed and fluttered. It bared a white neck on which lay a triangular bronze stain, and a pair of white arms bronzed to the elbow. In her lap lay a big bunch of scarlet geraniums, in her hair a single vivid blossom. In the long line of women in rocking chairs, she was the only one who neither read nor embroidered, the only one who sat upright and did not rock.

Miss Lord (she is the girl in this story) bowed and murmured something. Her face did not change in expression. Quite coolly she surveyed Mr. Wardwell.

It was easy for the human eye to survey Mr. Wardwell. Stalwart, strong-limbed, fine of line, his rather rugged face tanned a brick red, his stiffly curled brown hair burned yellow at the ends—every feminine head in the long line of rocking chairs had turned covertly, was still furtively studying him.

The Rev. Hiram Willoughby (he only

walks on in this drama) offered a quaint ministerial joke. Miss Lord greeted it with a laugh like a bird song and with an answering jest. The reverend gentleman emitted a bass roar and returned to the attack. Miss Lord rallied nobly and harried him from every side. Mr. Willoughby retreated under fire.

During these maneuvers Mr. Wardwell studied the landscape, as though by way of collecting himself.

The Margravine was a typical summer hotel, both fashionable and expensive. In the foreground lay a macadam driveway, smooth, white, bounded by a formal garden. An automobile party was just driving off, the men in leather leggings and white dusters, the women in écu coats and white veils—they looked like a back page three-color advertisement. Further along on the lawn of a terraced garden, two serious girls in khaki were practising round-the-clock putting. Still further, where a green and yellow boathouse sloped down to a quiet shimmering ocean, a crowd of white-trousered, white-hatted young men were hoisting the sail of a knockabout boat. Far to the left, through a fringe of apple trees, the observer could catch glimpses of plunging figures, could hear joyous and contentious shouts—the tennis courts.

Mr. Wardwell seemed to have succeeded in his efforts toward self-composure. He turned round in time to see Mr. Willoughby slip past the empty chair at Miss Lord's left. An instant later he was occupying it himself.

"And what brings you to a summer hotel?" Miss Lord inquired with a magnificent simplicity. "You look like a regular man."

This was true. Mr. Wardwell's appearance suggested the deck of a yacht, the saddle of a broncho, the seat of a mountain-climbing buckboard.

"I've been canoeing up the St. Lawrence," he said. "And I'm here for a week by way of getting refined."

"When did you arrive?" Miss Lord asked.

"Just fifteen minutes ago. Mr. Willoughby was the first person I met."

"Really!" commented Miss Lord with interest. "Good gracious, then you haven't heard about me yet?"

"No," Mr. Wardwell admitted. "But I suppose the hotel people don't dare advertise you openly as their main attraction. Besides, the town would be mobbed."

Miss Lord ignored the compliment. "You'll get it sooner or later," she said in a resigned tone. "I might as well tell you myself."

"Tell me the worst first," Mr. Wardwell entreated. "You're engaged."

Again Miss Lord ignored the persiflage. She did not speak for a moment. But, with her characteristic coolness, she let her gaze rest on his. Her eyes were mischievous; not one star but a whole galaxy gleamed in their depths. The young man sustained their gaze as best he could. "Allow me to reintroduce myself: Miss Dora Lord, the Margravine Man Eater."

"Shark or tiger?" Mr. Wardwell asked with interest.

"Both. In brief, the first thing you'll hear of me is that I'm a flirt."

"I guess I can survive that."

"Oh, but I'm not the gentle, domesticated kind. I'm a dreadful, calculating creature. I lead men on to their destruction, only to laugh at them in the end. In other words, I encourage them all along the line—and then throw them down when they propose. I haven't an atom of heart. This, at least, is what they'll tell you. In place of that organ beats something that's a cross between an icebox and a cash register. And nothing warmer or more stable than quicksilver flows in my veins. I'll go to almost any lengths to get

another scalp for my belt. Oh, I'm the limit," she ended quaintly.

"If any man starts to say a thing like that in my presence—" Mr. Wardwell began with a great deal of near-indignation.

"Oh, bless you, child of the trusting heart, the men won't say anything about me—except one, and he for the purpose of warning off competitors. The men are my slaves. It's the hotel tabbies who'll do all the talking. They'll tell you that I've roped in every man at the hotel. For instance—cast your eyes into the sun parlor at your left. In it you will see four elderly ladies engaged in what looks like a harmless game of bridge. In point of fact, they're misdealing, reneging, trumping each other's aces, raking in each other's tricks, playing anything but whist. They are watching this case. Look them over casually and I'll tell you all about them. The big, tall, dark warhorse in the lace fascinator, who from time to time emits a boom like a cannon, is Mrs. Silas M. Waterhouse. That lump of putty wrapped in the purple blanket is not a contour mask—it's a human being: widow—name, Mrs. Luella Cross. The girly-girly one of about fifty-four in the dotted swiss and baby ribbons is Miss Mildred Williams. The one with the undershot jaw, unconvincing false front and diamonds jammed together on all her fingers is Mrs. Roderick Forshaw."

"Of Waltham?"

"Yes."

"She's an old school friend of my mother's. I've always called her Aunt Emily. Gee, how I used to hate her when I was a little boy! She was always asking me to kiss her."

"She'll ask you to kiss her now. Lucky for you she's here, though. She won't leave you in any doubt as to my true character. She's great on evidence—we call her the 'Waltham Watch.' Now this is what they're saying about me: 'Don't look now, girls, but she's hooked another one. I declare its perfectly outrageous the way that girl carries on! If that Cousin Eleanor of hers would only stay at home and keep an eye on her, instead of ransacking the

country for that dreadful, worm-eaten old furniture she collects! Girls, don't look now—but she's gazing straight into his eyes over that bunch of geraniums." Miss Lord dreamily suited the action to the word. "I'd like to know what it is the men see in her! When you come to take her apart, there's nothing unusual about her. Her features are very irregular. And anybody would look startling with all that false hair and make-up. My husband says he can't for the life of him see why the men are so fascinated by her. He says that just because one of them started after her, all the others followed like sheep. Girls, don't look now—but she's actually putting a geranium in his buttonhole!" Miss Lord dreamily suited the action to the word. "Now of course she's got him on the string. She'll monopolize every moment of his time, and those nice studious Merriam girls or those sensible Walker sisters or that quiet, refined Miss Baker won't even meet him. Girls, if you'll believe it, she's studying his palm!" Miss Lord dreamily suited the action to the word. "The oldest trick known to man. Don't look now!"

"By the way, Mr. Wardwell, Aunt Emily recognized you a moment ago. By dinner time you'll have the list of my victims. It will probably be a little exaggerated. I am always satisfied with half a dozen proposals to the summer. This morning I was sure only of five. Now I'm pretty sure I'll pull six."

"You're absolutely sure of five?" Mr. Wardwell asked, with an appearance of great scientific interest.

"Absolutely. I couldn't prevent them from proposing now—even if I started to reform. Which of course I won't. You see, I shall begin to feel old when the proposals stop."

"But about the doubtful sixth?" he inquired. "That sporting proposition interests me most of all."

"It should," Miss Lord replied promptly, if a little inelegantly. "You're him—he—it."

Mr. James Wardwell's facial machinery seemed to stop completely for an instant. Then it started again.

"Well, this is generous," he said, "really generous. Few flirts play such a square game."

The lady accepted the compliment with a gracious nod.

"Forewarned is disarmed," he went on. "And now, beautiful one, shark or tiger, not wishing to take any unfair advantage but merely to gratify a low, prying curiosity, have you settled on the time that this proposal is to occur?"

"Oh, yes."

Mr. Wardwell meditated. "I hate to seem to be asking questions of so private and personal a character," he said apologetically, "but would you mind giving me the exact date?"

"Not at all. It is now Tuesday. I have you scheduled for Saturday night." Miss Lord paused. She gazed dreamily seaward.

The young men had got their boat away and were tacking out with the gentle morning breeze. The round-the-clock golf players had been joined by two men. The mixed-doubles party was coming up from the court, swinging rackets and chattering over their game. The hotel omnibus chugged its way around the corner to gather another load at the station. Mr. Wardwell could have seen none of this: his eyes had not left Miss Lord's face.

The Margravine Man Eater rose suddenly.

"Little one," she said in a patronizing tone, "you shouldn't be sitting here giving an impersonation of a young man who isn't afraid. You make me seem unsportsmanlike. I feel as though a deer—no, a darling little duck of a gazelle—had run up to me and begged to be shot. An impulse, finer than any I have ever known, stays my hands—almost. Do run along! Besides, the bridge game is over and childhood's friend is waiting round the corner full of asthmatic warnings as to my dreadful character."

"Only one thing," said Jimmie Wardwell. "Suppose I make another engagement for Saturday night?"

"You'll break it," replied Miss Lord promptly. She started off.

"Oh, by the way, Miss Lord," Mr.

Wardwell called suddenly, "I've hunted both kinds of man eaters—sharks and tigers. I know their methods."

"Then I have no further scruples in this matter," Miss Lord responded.

Jimmie Wardwell stood for an instant after the Margravine Man Eater had left him, gazing across the hotel grounds out to sea. It would have been obvious to the most unobservant of mortals that he saw none of the pleasant objects on which his eye rested. It was equally obvious that, mentally, he was considering something—a challenge possibly—and that, in an instant, he made a resolution of some sort. At any rate, his face suddenly hardened and tightened, and his teeth came together in a decided click. Then he turned and strolled briskly into the corridor. As he circled a pillar, he encountered a cloud of white lawn, Roman scarf, unconvincing false front and diamond rings which said in tones of honied sweetness:

"Well, here you are at last—Jimmie Wardwell—Nettie Sargeant's boy. Kiss your old Aunt Emily. My dear child, I've been looking for you everywhere. I've been out on the piazza all the afternoon playing whist. I saw you come in and get introduced to that Miss Lord. You sit right down here beside me. I've got something to tell you. You must avoid that girl, my dear. She is the worst flirt, *without any exception*, that I ever saw in my life. She eggs men on to propose to her just so she can refuse them. They call her 'the Margravine Man Eater.' She has *no principles whatever*. And *make-up!* All that hair is false, and as for her *complexion*—well, just let me tell you what she did to Bessie Abbott."

At dinner, Jimmie Wardwell found himself assigned to a table with strangers who do not enter into this story. He had scarcely seated himself and held parley with the college bred waitress when Miss Dora Lord made her entrance into the dining room. His face took on that same hardening and tightening of the features which had occurred on the piazza. He turned his eyes down on his plate; and then, as though forced by a power outside himself, he looked

up again. As she floated down the long bare room with its little tables, a wave of suppressed excitement rippled before and behind her. Every man raised his eyes and looked—looked, looked but with various expressions. For instance, the smooth and callow youth at the next table followed her with the expression of a Newfoundland dog who beholds his master. Miss Lord caught his eye and smiled at him with a lingering look.

Mr. Wardwell's face expressed scorn of the callow youth.

A middle-aged, apoplectic, broker-looking person passed two tables in his eagerness to pull out her chair for her. To him also Miss Lord spared a direct glance of deep personal interest.

Mr. Wardwell's face expressed scorn of the middle-aged broker.

A spick-and-span grandfather—at least two lisping cherubs at his table addressed him by that title—turned round in his chair and threw her some senile jape. There was a flash of white teeth, a bird note of her rippling laughter. Miss Lord bestowed on the aged jester the same look of subtle appreciation.

Mr. Wardwell's face expressed his scorn of the spick-and-span grandfather.

His eyes registered other impressions—as that of a woman reaching across the table to touch her man's hand and recall his attention to her request for the salt, and of a young girl's face turning like a flower to the sun, full of worshiping admiration. When Miss Lord settled herself opposite to that shadowy, middle-aged, faded blonde presence which was Cousin Eleanor, she swept a final glance over her field of conquest. She caught Jimmie Wardwell's glance and bowed.

Mr. Wardwell returned the bow with an eagerness that was positively acrobatic. Whereupon, he immediately began a savage onslaught on his clams. For the rest of the dinner, he never lifted his eye from his plate.

The next morning Wardwell came late for breakfast, already flanneled as one who is ready for the sports of the day. Apparently Miss Lord had breakfasted. At any rate, she was not in the

dining room. Strolling the length of the piazza, a half-hour later, Wardwell came upon her.

Again she sat in a rocking chair, and again she sat erect without rocking. This time, in place of the scarlet geraniums, a tennis racket rested in her lap. She wore a tennis costume of white piqué trimmed with navy blue. Wardwell observed that her long slender feet were encased in white silk stockings and immaculate white buckskin shoes. She removed her gaze from the little crescent of beach where a blue gingham baby boy and a pink gingham baby girl were building a sand castle. Her gaze was pensive, but the instant she rested it on Mr. Wardwell it became mischievous; stars began to whirl in her eyes.

"Ah," she said pleasantly, "my trusting heart tells me that the 'Waltham Watch' has told you about the Sawyer case. Pretty dreadful, wasn't it?"

"I thought so," he admitted sourly.

"I'm so afraid that you didn't get it all," Miss Lord said smoothly, "that I'm going to sum it up for you. Engaged couple arrive at hotel—to wit, Bessie Sawyer and Ham Abbott—nice young pair—perfectly devoted to each other—to be married in the fall. Margravine Man Eater lays eyes on the Abbott man and it's all off. Waylaying her helpless victim at every turn, she fascinates, enchants and enslaves him until heartbroken fiancée breaks the engagement and in a moment of pique elopes with one Warner, millionaire college chum of Abbott. Did you get all that?"

"Oh, that's not a quarter of what I got," Wardwell admitted savagely. "But as I don't believe in condemning anybody unheard, I'd like to hear your side of the case."

Miss Lord laughed. "Oh, I never bother to explain my side of the case." She rose. "There's our mixed-doubles team. Sorry I can't invite you to join us, but this is a tournament set." She hurried in the direction of a white duck and flannel group chattering on the hotel steps.

"By the way, Mr. Wardwell," she

called, turning midway, "don't forget our appointment!"

"What appointment?" Wardwell asked—and mentally cursed himself the next moment.

"Why, Saturday night! Remember, I told you that there must be six." She laughed mockingly and disappeared down the steps.

Mr. Wardwell drifted about the hotel for the rest of the morning doing a number of things. He chatted for a while with Mrs. Forbush, who purred like a contented cat. She introduced him to the studious Merriam girls, the sensible Walker sisters and the quiet, refined Miss Baker; but Wardwell found the society of none of these ladies stimulating. He tried a few solitary drives on a golf course as closely cropped as a billiard table. He took a solitary dip in an ocean as flat as a pancake. He took a solitary walk down a road as trim as a piece of tape. Returning by a new path through the hotel grounds, he found himself at the tennis courts. The mixed-doubles tournament was still on. Mr. Wardwell lingered a while, watching Miss Lord. He observed with obvious approval her swift, strong, unfeminine serve, her strategic placing of the ball, her quick work at the net. Before he quite realized what had happened, the set had ended and he had been drawn into a game with Miss Lord against the strongest team in the hotel, and had beaten it two sets in succession.

"This is very foolhardy," Miss Lord said to him on his way back to the Margravine. "You're courting certain destruction. You're putting your head in the lion's mouth. Please don't say when you propose to me Saturday night that I didn't warn you."

"Miss Lord," Mr. Wardwell replied with a dignity almost austere, "I'm very sorry to say that I cannot keep that appointment for Saturday night. I've made another engagement."

"A woman?" Miss Lord asked with her customary directness.

"A woman," Mr. Wardwell answered with a shade of solemnity.

"Dear me, you *do* make it hard for

me," Miss Lord said reproachfully. "You'd better warn her that you may have to duck."

"On the contrary, I think I shall have no difficulty whatever in keeping it," Mr. Wardwell said with emphasis.

"That seals your doom," Miss Lord said. "After this, no mercy will be shown."

Mr. Wardwell spent the afternoon driving with Aunt Emily. He spent the evening writing letters in his room. The next day he breakfasted late and alone in a deserted dining room. For an hour or two after breakfast he walked with one of the Misses Merriam back into the country. In the middle of the morning he returned. Pointedly avoiding the tennis court, he repaired to the beach and got into his bathing suit.

The shore was dotted with children in colored rompers, maids in white caps, pails, shovels, shoes, stockings, half-constructed edifices of sand. The few bathers were of the type who keep close to shore and jump up and down between hysterical screams. Far ahead of Wardwell, a small feminine head in a brilliant green cap bobbed a persistent course to the farthest raft. Putting the green dot as his goal, Mr. Wardwell threw his whole strength into the effort to pass it. As he drew alongside, the cap turned and displayed under a coquettish green fringe the face of Miss Dora Lord.

"I knew it was you," she remarked casually.

"I'd like to know how you knew it," he demanded.

"Why, didn't you know that any well trained flirt has all kinds of instincts and intuitions in her repertoire?"

"That sounds good. But, as it happens, I didn't know myself that I was going in swimming until fifteen minutes ago."

"Of course. It wasn't until fifteen minutes ago that I sent out a mental hurry-up call for you. I called across the void to you and you came in person."

"Liar!" he remarked in a severe voice.

"In all my experience," she said sadly, "I have never met such a rash young person. You're predestined to

destruction. It's a shame to take the money."

They had reached the raft. With a sudden athletic leap of her long, slim body, Miss Lord lifted herself on it. With a second and more athletic leap, Mr. Wardwell landed beside her. Miss Lord wore a long black silk bathing suit with touches of the same green that made her cap. Her long, strong-looking arms were bare. She wore black silk stockings with firm, well fitting black slippers heelless and cross-gartered like a toe dancer's.

"Are you going to dive?" he asked.

"Foolish question number seven thousand," she commented severely. "You know what Aunt Emily said about my hair and my complexion."

"Yes," Mr. Wardwell admitted promptly—and then blushed a beautiful brick red whose furthest confines were concealed by his bathing suit.

Miss Lord appeared not to notice. "Well, how long do you suppose they'd survive the process of diving?"

"Not long," he admitted, "as far as the complexion is concerned. But I should think the cap would keep your hair on."

"Well, it wouldn't. But do you dive?" she questioned.

He nodded.

"Some time," she said in a wheedling tone, "when it's very deserted here and we two are alone, would you mind giving me some lessons? I'm just dying to dive, but I hate to try it with a crowd about."

That hardening and stiffening of Mr. Wardwell's face manifested itself. "I am very sorry," he said formally; "I'm afraid I can't promise. I expect to leave Cowassett Saturday morning."

Miss Lord's gaze became starry. "Scared to death," she commented. "Well, perhaps one of my other victims will teach me."

"One of them will have to, I'm afraid," Mr. Wardwell said, a slight note of triumph thrilling in his tone.

"All right then," Miss Lord said in a resigned way. "Let me see you dive."

Mr. Wardwell ran across the raft and dove off. His body cut the water as

clean as a knife blade. When he came up, Miss Lord was not on the raft nor in sight. "Good Lord!" he said, and beat a frenzied way around in circles.

"Here I am," a voice called suddenly. Miss Lord emerged from her long, underwater swim. And as Mr. Wardwell, treading water, contemplated her speechless, she drew herself up again onto the raft and launched herself in a splendid sideways dive. Again she swam for a long way under water. This time she emerged with her cap in her hand. Again she drew herself up onto the raft. Still numbed to silence, Mr. Wardwell surveyed the roses which had survived the water, and the long mane of hair which hung in a limp tangle to her knees. He blushed again.

But again Miss Lord took no notice. She began to readjust her hair under the frilled green cap.

"You—you—" Mr. Wardwell groaned. "You're unspeakable!"

"Wasn't I the first one to tell you so?" Miss Lord demanded. She dove again—backward. And she swam away from the raft, on her back this time, facing Mr. Wardwell. "Coming along?" she said, her eyes full of dancing stars. "Or are you afraid?"

"I'm afraid," Wardwell groaned; "but I'm coming."

On the way to the shore, they met the apoplectic, middle-aged, broker-looking person, swimming out. Miss Lord introduced them. He turned out to be a Mr. Ridley. He greeted Miss Lord effusively, but he acknowledged the introduction with a curt nod. He challenged Miss Lord to swim back with him to the raft. Miss Lord accepted.

Midway to the raft, "Don't forget, Mr. Wardwell," she called back in her silvery voice.

"Forget what?" Mr. Wardwell answered, and immediately delivered to himself a severe under-water kick.

"Why, Saturday night," she answered. "I must have six." A rippling laugh, like audible fireworks, floated back to him.

That night, when Wardwell sauntered out of the dining room, he met Mr.

Ridley. It was apparent that Mr. Ridley had been lying in wait for him. "Come out on the piazza with me for a smoke," he said, linking his arm familiarly in Wardwell's. "I'm going to give you some good advice, young feller, if you'll excuse the liberty. I'm an old stager when it comes to hotel flirts, and I hate to see you going up against such a raw game. I'm going to talk to you like a Dutch uncle."

They passed out onto the piazza. Miss Lord, in peacock satin and gold, the center of a group of men, cast Mr. Wardwell a cryptic smile and passed.

When Mr. Wardwell came to breakfast the next morning, late as usual, he was dressed for golf. And immediately after breakfast, without—in a manner of speaking—looking either to the right or the left, markedly avoiding the Scylla of the tennis courts and the Charybdis of the Atlantic Ocean, he made his solitary way to the golf links. Mr. Wardwell seemed, for some reason or other, to be in a bad humor. He drove off as though he had a personal animosity against the ball, and he continued to pursue it with an unrelenting hatred. He was far from respectful to his caddie, and after an unsought-for introduction to Bogie, he treated that inoffensive person to an unreserve of vocabulary positively shocking. Halfway over the links, the course turned about a little hill. There he came across Miss Lord, reposing dreamily on the grass, a broken midiron at her side.

"Good morning," she said casually, "I've been waiting for you here a whole hour." Mr. Wardwell did not answer. As she viewed the young man's dour aspect, the pensive look in her eyes broke into stars. "Something tells me that you have learned about the Robinson case," she remarked.

"Well, 'something' is right," Wardwell said savagely. He hit the ball a slashing stroke. It disappeared into space and futurity. It may here be mentioned that it has never been discovered. It accomplished something, however: the caddie started after it.

"Sometimes I think the Robinson case was worse than the Sawyer case," Miss Lord went on.

"Sometimes you're right," Mr. Wardwell agreed, still savagely.

Miss Lord leaned back against the hillside and lazily contemplated the sky. "Young married couple," she said, apparently addressing the aimless crow flapping overhead. "Crazy about each other. Husband meets the Margravine Man Eater and it's all over. Miss Lord deliberately sets herself to the task of breaking up the marriage—lures the man oftener and oftener from his wife's side. He becomes her slave—and then she throws him down. Man leaves suddenly for Europe. Same old story. Investigation of his affairs. The bank's books have been tampered with—he's been stealing regularly. Who's to blame? Why, the Margravine Man Eater, of course. Is that the way you got it?"

"Word for word," Mr. Wardwell replied bitterly.

Miss Lord rose, yawned, stretched herself. "Well, I must be getting back," she said. "I've golfed the entire morning, and I've broken my midiron."

Mr. Wardwell made no comment.

Miss Lord studied him carefully. What she saw in his face lightened her spirits perceptibly. "It's no use your struggling any longer," she said pityingly. "You're lost. I don't have to be generous any more."

Mr. Wardwell surveyed her—mute. Then, with a short laugh, he fell into step beside her. "By Jove, you—well, if you think you're getting away for one moment with— After all I've heard— If you'd only explain— You said the first time I saw you that you were the limit, and you're all of that."

Miss Lord paid no attention to these splutterings. "What gown do you prefer me to wear?" she asked in a businesslike tone.

"When?"

"Tomorrow night."

"Tomorrow night!" he repeated, mystified.

"Why, when you propose—goose!"

"Oh, thunder!" Wardwell roared. "I

beg your pardon. But I told you I had an engagement for tomorrow evening."

"And I told you," she said in a bored tone, "that you'd break it."

Mr. Wardwell did not sleep well that night. His room was hot, and a persistent mosquito sang in his ears without intermission. When he did fall off, he dreamed vaguely disquieting dreams. The next morning he packed the studious Merriam girls, the sensible Walker sisters and the quiet, refined Miss Baker into the hotel touring car and tore off fifty miles of surrounding country. In the afternoon he hired a rig and took Aunt Emily, who did not like automobiling, to ride.

"I'm so sorry, Aunt Emily," he was saying as they mounted the hotel steps, "that I can't make that call with you this evening. But I must leave on the seven o'clock train. That telegram just ruins my plans for the next month."

Mr. Wardwell hurriedly packed his trunk, rushed to the dining room for an early dinner, paid his bill and gave up the key to his room. Starting downstairs, he met Miss Lord coming up. Miss Lord was dressed for the dance in a gown of black lace and gold with gold slippers and a jeweled band in her hair. Altogether she looked more sumptuous than he had ever seen her.

"I'm saving the last dance for you," she said, shooting a glance electric with stars straight into his eyes.

"Don't bother," he said stiffly. "I'm leaving at seven."

Miss Lord only continued to smile starrily.

Mr. Wardwell jumped into the hotel omnibus, rode to the station, bought his ticket, picked out a comfortable seat, ensconced himself there with a bunch of papers and a French novel—all this with much deliberation. He devoted himself to the novel. For the first half-hour his eyes never left it. Then his gaze began to stray out the window—to stray with greater and greater frequency, and to fix on something of the imagination which he saw there.

Shayneford is a little town halfway between Cowassett and Boston. When the accommodation train pulled into

Shayneford, Mr. Wardwell, as though by a great, steady effort of his will, had opened his French novel again and sat frowning over its pages. Many people were getting off at Shayneford. Once or twice he looked up, still frowning, at the parade of plump, fussy mothers, begauded country girls, shave-necked country beaux, dragging their luggage down the aisle. As the last perspiring family dumped itself upon the station platform, as the brakeman raised his hand to signal to the engineer—

Jimmie Wardwell closed his novel with a slap, seized his bag and coat, rushed down the aisle, swept aside the protecting brakeman and swung, at the peril of his neck, from the moving vestibule to the stationary platform.

Picking himself up, he rushed to the telegraph office, wrote and dispatched this telegram:

Miss DORA LORD,
The Margravine,
Cowassett.

I have left the train at Shayneford to telegraph this to you. You're right. Once a man

gets you in his system, it's all over. Here's your sixth scalp. I love you. I leave on the ten twenty-five for Boston.

JAMES WARDWELL.

The operator and station agent at Shayneford had no secrets from the express and baggage agent. Within ten minutes the latter was fully informed of the content of this message. For two hours the two nudged each other and snickered behind their hands while a stalwart young man paced the platform, smoking innumerable cigars. At the end of two hours the key began to click.

"You win, Bill!" observed the operator over his shoulder, as he set himself to copy the message. And this is what he passed through the window into the nervous hands of the strange young man:

JAMES WARDWELL,
Station platform,
Shayneford.

I made up my mind to marry you the moment I set eyes on you. All those stories are lies. I'll be at the station to meet the eleven o'clock train. I've saved the last dance for you.

DORA.



EXILE

By Kelsey Percival Kitchel

GR^EAT barren mountains heaped against a sky

That blazes in its faultless, mocking blue;

An endless, thirsty desert where nor dew

Nor rain nor spring nor winter can the dry

And arid waste revive; where sounds no cry,

No song of any life; where hot winds strew

With stinging sands the bleached gray plants whose hue

The very thoughts of April green belie.

How all my heart flies north where is the spring!

My burnt-out eyes recall still vividly

Deep woodlands dark with rain, the little streams

Edged with anemones. My soul hears sing

A thrush in glens at home where I would be . . .

But here—there is no May, save in my dreams.

TO THE HARPIES

By Arthur Davison Ficke

YOU who with birch or laurel
Are swift to scourge or bless—
Silence your foolish quarrel
Before her loveliness.

What though she went a-travel
Down paths you do not know?
Your words shall not unravel
Webs that allured her so.

Hush now your foolish babble
Around her golden head.
Shut out the prying rabble.
Be happy. She is dead.

Now give one final kindness
That late you dreamed not of—
Silence, to cloak your blindness—
Peace, since you know not love.



CAPRICIOUS COGITATIONS

By Hilda Owsley

THE real danger of marriage discussions is not the probability of convincing your opponent—it is the possibility of convincing yourself.

Marry at leisure and repent in haste.

Women who fascinate men are invariably regarded with grave suspicion by women who do not fascinate men.

The City of Otherly Love—Reno.

In the great game of hide and seek called Love, the usual procedure is to seek before marriage—and hide after.

THE PROPER THING

By Thomas Grant Springer

MAMIE was a cabaret dancer in a Second Avenue café, but that was merely because her twinkling feet had not been long enough before the public to tread the star path. The haze of tobacco smoke still obscured them from the managerial eye, for Second Avenue is a long way from Broadway, and a star must shine brightly to rise high in the East Side.

As yet the pure physical joy of rhythmic motion had not stirred the pulse of ambition. Mamie danced as unconsciously as a flower sways in the wind. She was thistledown set in poetic motion by the breath of music. She merely danced, and the fact that she received payment for it was a happy accident that made possible the profitable gratification of a primitive passion.

While the other performers circulated from table to table, establishing a cheap intimacy with their audience, Mamie made the most of her small floor space with a joyous self-seclusion. When, between turns, the other girls shared the wine if not the food of the male diners, she sat alone wrapped in her light cloak, behind the soft curtain of which her restricted feet moved nervously until time again shook off their restraint.

She had nothing to contribute to the dressing room confidences of the other girls. Not that masculine opportunity had not buzzed beelike about this wild flower, but as yet it shook only to the breath of music, its honey folded safely under cold heart petals.

"Say, kid, if ye had as much life in yer eyes as ye got in yer toes, ye wouldn't be takin' a street car home every night; ye'd have a limosette of yer own with

diamond tires," the beefy coon shouter used to tell her.

"Sure, kick into the game and be a little freer with yer moves when ye ain't doin' yer turn, and ye can do a cancan on some of the Johnnies' hearts that'll shake 'em down for a sunburst," advised the ragtime artist who writhed through her songs without the aid of a voice and was the hit of the place.

But Mamie, for all this professional advice, continued to dance as before, contented with the personal joy of it. The leering admiration that sometimes followed her movements was lost upon her, for her real vision never pierced the hazy curtain of tobacco smoke that hung between this nymph and the satyrs that turned their attention to others not proof against them. Now and then she was forced to decline an insistent invitation that was pressed upon her, but as there were plenty of other girls to swell the wine list of sporty diners, and as Mamie danced to a low salary but a really high regard in the minds of the patrons, the proprietors were prone to let her have her own way.

"She's the frosty proposition, all right," said one of the girls as they were discussing her among themselves.

"Sure," another agreed, "but wait till Johnny Right comes along; then good night—what a bump," and she waved her hand in sophisticated certainty.

"You're on; we're all alike," another laughed with a sort of pitying bitterness.

But, in spite of prophecy, time was danced away by Mamie with her heart still in her toes.

One night Algie Van Thorne, out seeing life with a party of friends, dropped in for dinner. Algie was trying hard to

be sporty, not because he wanted to be but because it seemed to be the proper thing, and all his life Algie had been brought up to have a great regard for the proper thing. The immaculate evening clothes, the affected blasé air of the party and the fact that they ordered champagne immediately singled them out for the blandishments of the singers. One by one they were entertained at the table, Algie trying bravely to enter into the festal spirit of the occasion and succeeding but indifferently, for he had, on the whole, a silly feeling. Of course he did not want to make a prig of himself, and though he tried manfully to overcome his feeling of unmasculine shyness, he never quite succeeded, nor did the champagne ever help him, for if he drank too much it invariably made him sick. He was not particularly shy with girls of his own set, but these women seemed different. Finally he took refuge in an air of assumed boredom, nor was he roused from it until Mamie came on to dance.

Focussing intent eyes upon her slim, rhythmic form, he lost all interest in everything else. The clash and clatter of cutlery and crockery became the tinkle of rippling streams; the hum and buzz of conversation softened to the murmur of bees seeking honey in the hearts of lotus; the strains of the orchestra were the Aeolian harp of the woods, swept softly by invisible fingers.

When the dance was finished and the strident voice of the coon shouter brought him back to harsh reality, he leaned across the table to the entertainer who was their transient guest.

"I beg your pardon," he said politely, "but who is the little girl who just danced?"

She smiled at him broadly. "Her name's Mamie Clancey, but don't let it worry you," she laughed. "She's got a lively pair of kicks, but that's as far as it goes. I'd introduce you, but it wouldn't do no good."

Algie felt glad and sorry at the statement: glad of an ideal, sorry to find her in such surroundings; but the faint smile with which he strove to cover his feelings was immediately mistaken.

"Naughty, naughty," someone said. "Oh, you Algie!" chanted another, and in the general laugh that followed he sat reddening with anger and embarrassment. He was intensely relieved when they finally left the café.

The entertainer who had been their guest sat down by Mamie during a lull later in the evening.

"You made a hit tonight with somebody that ought to have sprung a comeback with you," she said.

"Did I?" asked Mamie indifferently.

"Uh-huh, and he was a nice, clean-lookin' kid, too, and not a bit fresh, neither. He got awful red when the bunch joshed him," and she laughed reminiscently, glancing at Mamie's face, which showed not the faintest interest. "Gee, but you got an icy heart!" and she grinned as she moved off for her turn.

A night or two afterward Algie appeared in the café alone. Mamie's informer saw him almost immediately and moved over to where Mamie sat, as usual, alone, dreamy-eyed and shiftily-footed, improvising steps under the shelter of her cloak.

"Say, Mame," she said, "there's your crush. You know, the feller I was tellin' ye about the other night. That's him over there alone sittin' at the third table on the right. Just lamp over there and tell me, honest, ain't he a nice-lookin' kid?"

Mamie looked in the direction indicated, and found something in the boyish face that stirred her interest. She stared at him frankly as she had not looked at any one of the diners before, and when his own eyes, drawn magnetically by her gaze, met hers, the wave of color that crept up his face found an answering warmth in her own as they glanced away like two shy children in the embarrassing dawn of acquaintance.

The other girl looked from one to the other, then moved away smiling. "I wonder if the frost's goin' to melt?" she speculated idly, and proceeded to watch developments. But though the boy lingered until late, interested apparently only when Mamie danced, he made no attempt to approach her.

For several evenings following he

made his appearance, but as there seemed no development to the affair the girls who watched it lost interest in a thing so devoid of action. Then one evening the entertainers received a distinct shock at discovering him in shy but earnest conversation with Mamie, not at his table but in the secluded corner that she had made her own. Excited inquiry disclosed the amazing fact that he had sought a perfectly proper introduction from one of the proprietors, and after a short conversation he returned to his table, watched Mamie's next dance and then left.

Mamie received the first chaffing of her companions with a calm disregard that was its own protection. Little by little the affair progressed with all the slow shyness of a serious juvenile school flirtation. The sophisticated giggles of the other girls affected Mamie only as they might have annoyed her at the heart budding age of ten, for emotionally she was still at that period. Only the surface signs of café amours met her strangely innocent eyes, and the sordid intimacies they covered had been merely hearsay to her. She knew what she knew without really understanding it.

Nevertheless, to the others prophecy was being fulfilled. Johnny Right had broken the ice, and for him at least the thaw had set in. Two or three nights a week he made it a habit to drop in, later and later, until at last he was merely in time for Mamie's last dance, after which he would see her home. But in spite of the fact that he was, as the girls declared, "a swell guy," there was never a motor waiting for them. Out into the night the two drifted and, weather permitting, walked or took a plebeian street car. The weeks drifted on, but still Mamie's breast shone only with its own whiteness. No diamonds glittered there. There were no wine-excited conversations over a table. To be sure, she looked now and then to the third table on the right, which a liberally tipped waiter kept religiously reserved, and her last dance grew to be noticeably her best.

Had the other girls overheard the homeward conversations of these two

they would not have believed their own ears. It was merely that of a shy boy and girl whom Love was drawing, with almost reluctant footsteps, toward his mysterious borderland. There was always the shy pause at the front steps of Mamie's modest home, where the widowed mother awaited her, a handclasp that lingered so naturally that they scarcely noticed its duration, and she would flit up the steps with just the suspicion of a creeping warmth about her heart, while he turned west with an unaccountable satisfaction which seemed to demand no more than its unconscious acknowledgment.

But there is never a modern Eden without its serpent, hissing, hissing insistent whispers to taste the forbidden fruit. To Mamie these whispers came from her companions of the café, who could see but one thing between a man and woman. These little evil hisses at first did not pierce her inner consciousness. Serene in her own mind, she rejected the poison others were trying to inject into it, immune in her own purity of thought.

Then one night Algie's friends, a little the worse for the lateness of the hour, found him at the third table on the right.

"Oh, look who's here!" cried one in real astonishment.

"Welcome, little stranger; we have missed you from our midst," another bantered, and with no possible escape from the inevitable, Algie accepted the intrusion and several drinks, which he did not want. Soon some of the other entertainers had found the party, and in the more or less coarse banter that ensued the tale of Algie's conquest came out. Shy hints were dropped here and there, laughing comments and insinuations that brought a burning flush to his cheeks; then, as the wine and words mixed together in his mind, he found himself in the old attitude of falling in with the proper thing.

When Mamie came on for her last dance he looked at her through the eyes of others. Her graceful movements took on a new meaning. A certain half-shameful pride of conquest stirred him,

fanned by the laughing breath of those who chaffed him enviously. He had won a prize others vainly coveted, but though he had plucked the fruit he had not yet tasted it. He left the merry table with an affected swagger as she flitted away.

"Bring her over and introduce her," one called, but Algie shook his head and passed out to the door, where the cool breath of the night somewhat dampened the fever of folly with which he had been infected. Nevertheless, when Mamie made her appearance, he reflected that he had not been doing the proper thing by her and resolved to remedy the delay. He was a little more silent than usual as they walked toward Mamie's home through the quiet streets. As they paused at the steps he became flutteringly conscious of the lingering hand-clasp and tightened his own. She tried gently to withdraw hers, but he quickly drew her from the step on which she stood and kissed her. Considered as the first, it was not a success. She drew away, looking at him curiously in the dim street light, and as he in half-timid indecision allowed her to retreat up the steps he heard her saying, "Good night, good night," in a voice that had a growing note of wonder in it.

Mamie did not go immediately to sleep as was her wont. The warmth of that awkward kiss burnt hotly on her lips. The whispered insinuations of the girls at the café grew into significant realities. She had always thought of Algie as being as child-hearted as herself, but now he had awakened the woman, and to what purpose? She asked herself the question with awed speculation. The change of her feelings toward him was too sudden to bear analysis. She thought of the other girls in their free attitude toward men and began dimly to realize what it really meant. Algie had always been a boy to her, but with that swift caress he had suddenly sprung into manhood. Their former shy companionship stood trembling, frightenedly, before her. Never again could it trust itself upon the old frank footing. Realizing this, and vaguely planning for the change, she at length fell into a troubled sleep.

It was several nights before Algie again made his appearance, and when his eyes met hers there was a shameful consciousness in them. She motioned him to come to her, and looked seriously into his face as he seated himself awkwardly beside her.

"I'm glad I caught you before we started home," she said in hurried tones. "I don't want you to come with me tonight."

"Are you angry with me?" he asked with quick concern.

"No," and she shook her head slowly, "no, I ain't. I want you to come tomorrow. Will you?"

"Yes."

"Sure?" and there was a sudden note of eagerness in her voice.

He nodded, shook hands shortly and left. Mamie sat a long time with dream-dimmed eyes and softly smiling lips.

The ragtime singer watched her curiously. "Wonder if she had a row with her feller? He didn't wait tonight."

"'Course she didn't; look at her smile," returned the contralto.

"Ye can't tell nothin' by that," and the other shook her head. "She's a queer one."

The next night Algie did not come until late, so late in fact that Mamie was ready for her last dance before he gained his table. She flashed a quick, cordial smile at him that immediately dispelled the gloom of his eyes as she stepped lightly to the open space before the orchestra. Her dancing was marvelous. She seemed a creature of air, a wraith, a sprite whose lightness spurned the earth beneath her flying feet. During the burst of applause that followed, Algie made his way toward the entrance with a quick elation dispelling the dull weight that had been the aftermath of that kiss. Surely he had been wrong to feel so silly over it.

When Mamie appeared she seemed unaccountably excited.

"Let's take a car," she proposed, although the night was fine, and while Algie would have much preferred the intimacy of a walk he acquiesced. She chattered gaily until they reached her street, and then almost ran him along in

frantic haste. Arriving at the stoop, she slipped her arm through his. "I want you to come in tonight," she said in a nervous tone. "I told Ma I was going to bring you." And before he could answer she almost dragged him up the steps.

The hall was dim and smelly. It breathed the odor of a hive of human bees. It was an atmosphere unknown and immediately oppressive to Algie. He followed her up several flights and stood nervously while she fitted a key into a door that ranged with several others on a square landing.

"Ma," she called softly. "Ma."

"Yes, dearie," a voice answered, a voice that had the soft burr of an Irish brogue.

"This is Mr. Van Thorne," and Algie found himself clasping a toil-roughened hand while he looked into a kindly wrinkled face framed in closely drawn gray hair.

"I'm glad to meet ye, sor," Mrs. Clancey said with a touch of embarrassment which plainly showed that masculine visitors were an unusual thing in the little flat; then she released his hand, and groping in the dim light turned up the low gas flame. The yellow glare flooded the room, disclosing a scrupulously neat but time-worn interior. The furniture was cheap and old and gave the impression of having been picked up bit by bit at long intervals. A table was set in the center with places for two.

"Mamie's always hungry when she comes home," the mother explained, and stole into another room from which almost immediately came the rattle of tinware. Mamie took a seat at the table and motioned Algie to the one opposite. He slid awkwardly into the chair and surveyed the table. The food was coarse and substantial: thick sandwiches of cold meat, a round cheese, crackers and a plain cake. The mother returned and poured tea for them into the thick cups, set down the granite pot at Mamie's side and bade them a quiet good night.

The silence that followed was all to Mamie's advantage as she served him.

She took a frankly hungry bite of her sandwich and smiled across at him.

"I thought I'd bring you home," she said. "It's a whole lot better than the front steps, and I ain't one to go 'round other places. I guess you ain't, either."

"No," Algie agreed slowly.

"You see, I ain't like the other girls at the café. They're out for a good time, but I only like to dance—alone," she added with unconscious emphasis.

"You dance wonderfully," he assured her.

"Well, I got to wondering if I did," she said, and smiled dreamily. "If I do, I can't let nothing interfere with it, can I?"

"No," he said, somewhat uncertainly.

"That's what I thought," she went on, "and I got to thinking it over the other night after—after you kissed me," and she blushed slightly.

Algie looked down at his plate.

"I never let a fellow kiss me that way before, and I guess you ain't much that way either, are you?"

"No," he answered very low.

"And you'd been with that crowd and there was wine on your breath."

He shifted uneasily, then raised his eyes slowly to meet hers.

"Now you ain't cut out to run 'round cafés," she went on, "and I ain't cut out to be picking up with them that do. That's just how we happened to like each other, ain't it?"

He nodded slowly, a growing admiration in his eyes.

"But we just liked each other. Nothing silly until—that."

"No." It seemed to him the only honest answer now.

She smiled, a smile of relief, and as he recognized it his own lips answered.

"I guess we got each other's number now," and she took another sandwich and turned the conversation.

In an hour he had told her of his mother and sisters and how he was going into his father's office with him as soon as he returned from the big case he was on, and she was telling him how she had discovered that the café was no place for her—nor for him.

It was with great reluctance that he

finally rose to go. At the door he paused.

"Mamie," he said with a deep note of admiration, "you are wonderful."

"No, I ain't," she laughed; "I just got sense and I wanted to find out where we stood. I'm going to leave the café as soon as I can get a real job. It's no place for a nice girl, or a nice fellow either."

"May I see you after that?" he asked.

"Sure, if you want to—here," she replied. "It ain't much of a place but it's my home."

He hesitated a moment. He wanted to say the proper thing, but something in her face stopped him; then she laughed again.

"Don't you know, you and me's different; that's why I brought you here to-night—I wanted you to see. You've got your way and I've got mine, and they couldn't ever be the same. That kiss was a slip; this is really what you meant," and she held out her hand in the old friendly way.

"But we can be friends," he faltered as he took it.

"Sure, good friends—and that's all," she added with deep conviction; then he went down the stairs and out under the clean stars with a beautiful sense of relief.

And as Mamie lay staring into the darkness she smiled. She had found her heart. It was in her feet, and they were safely set on the path of ambition.



THE WOLF

By Richard Butler Glaenger

WITH the breath of the wolf upon my neck,

I feast upon the breathless stars:

Arrow and Lyre are at my beck,

Alcor am I to all Mizars!

But the breath of the wolf is on my neck!

How shall I match high Algebar's

Girdle and sword of ageless light?

How shall I shun this Thing that mars

The spirit, blasts the heart with blight?

For the breath of the wolf is on my neck!

Only for flesh the wolf pack yearn;

With blood alone the wolf maw streams;

Only in lust the wolf eye gleams:

For blood and flesh to evil burn!

And the breath of the wolf is on my neck!

Heartened, I drink the star-brimmed night,

My back to That which whines and harrs;

But can I feast in fast's despite

Through years of sun-filled avatars?

Ah, the breath of the wolf is on my neck!

Have I the strength to scorn the scars,

The iron fearlessness to check

That which would tear me from the stars? . . .

The breath of the wolf upon my neck!

BRANDED MAVERICKS*

By H. O. Stechhan and Maverick Terrell

CHARACTERS

TOLLIVER

MIGUEL

TOM

DICK

HARRY

PLACE: A salt basin in West Texas.

TIME: A decade or so ago.

SCENE—A combination saloon and store on the Double Bar S Ranch: the interior of a thick-walled, adobe building, with a low, beamed ceiling, from which hang strips of dried meat, corn husks, odd bits of harness, apron "chaps," spurs, lariats, snakeskins, gourds, sugarcane and a large earthen vessel for drinking water. At the back is a large arched space, without doors, and with small, open windows on either side. A door at the left leads into an adjoining chuckroom; another, at the right, opens into the horse shed. The stub of a bar extends from the left into the room about six feet. Back at the right is a plain round table with several Texas horn, cowhide chairs. Cards and chips are scattered carelessly on the table. Just below it is a dilapidated secretary-bookcase, showing a few old volumes, and at the right stands a small safe. Just outside a low porch, level with the ground, is seen through the windows.

At the rise of the curtain, the stage is empty. After a slight pause, TOLLIVER and MIGUEL come in through the door at the right, dragging a saddle with thick, bulging bags. TOLLIVER is a smooth-faced young fellow with reddish hair and a cherub countenance, large of frame; dressed in khaki trousers, loose flannel shirt and ordinary shoes; bareheaded, apparently unarmed. He appears peaceable and wholly out of his element in these surroundings. MIGUEL is the ordinary, sullen, slow-going Mexican of the borderland.

TOLLIVER (as MIGUEL drops his end of the saddle)

What d'ye mean?

MIGUEL (falling into a chair)

Too heavy.

TOLLIVER (still tugging at the saddle)

What you expect—eighty-five thou-

sand bucks to weight like a bunch of feathers?

MIGUEL

One buen job, señor. (He rolls a cigarette, as he chuckles to himself.) Damn buenol!

TOLLIVER

Yes, and it's my last one. This hold-up business ain't what it used to be.

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THE SMART SET

MIGUEL

We cross Rio Grande—

TOLLIVER (*breaking in*)

Tonight! You're sure, Miguel, the boss won't be back?

MIGUEL

Cierto, señor.

TOLLIVER

Well, I'll feel better once we're over the river with this. (*He kicks the saddle.*)

MIGUEL

Nobody evaire fin' dese place, cabalero. Me creé en Dios, señor—me creé! (*Distant hoofbeats are faintly heard.*)TOLLIVER (*turning on MIGUEL*)Nobody ever find this place! You hear that? (*MIGUEL dashes back to the opening and looks down the road.*) Well, who is it?

MIGUEL

No sabé! (*He steps out on the porch.*)

TOLLIVER

Here, you—come back.

MIGUEL (*returning surlily*)

Well—

TOLLIVER

Help get this on a peg, quick! (*Both strain at the saddle and stagger back to the right with their burden.*)MIGUEL (*after the saddle has been hung up*)

Whew—him heavy.

TOLLIVER

Now, you get in there. (*Pointing to the door at the right.*) I'll turn in here. (*Indicating the outer door.*) And don't you come out till I call you. You hear? (*Meanwhile, the hoofbeats have been getting louder.*)

MIGUEL

Si, señor.

TOLLIVER

Vamos! (Both disappear off, right and left.)

VOICE

Who-a-ah!

*(An unseen horseman is heard to bring up suddenly outside and dismount; immediately thereafter, TOM appears in the doorway at the back. A well-appearing man of thirty, of medium height and strongly built, dressed in cowboy regalia. His shifty look stamps him a desert soldier of fortune. He beats the dust from himself with his hat; then enters and looks about for signs of life.)*TOM (*rapping on the bar and yelling loudly*)

Hey, pronto! Ain't there some slink-eyed son of a rustler about the premises? Helluva cow farm!

*(He goes to the safe, kicks it slightly, and snorts. At this point, the door at the left opens gently and TOLLIVER cautiously pokes his head into the room. TOM wheels suddenly and makes as if to draw his gun; but on seeing the radiantly serene fat man carrying a big dish of food, TOM desists.)*TOLLIVER (*pausing on the threshold*)

Well, you ash-colored, alkali-blotched sand crab! What you makin' all this noise fer—'round our happy little home?

TOM

You don't wantta come in sudden-like on me agin, fren'. I gotta weak heart.

TOLLIVER

Never mind the "gat"! Where's your manners—can't ye see I'm eatin'? (*He goes to the bar and puts the dish on it.*)TOM (*approaching him*)

Who're you—a-talkin' to me, that a-way?

TOLLIVER (*reaching into his shirt front as if to scratch himself*)Who are you, stranger? (*He climbs onto the bar stool.*)

TOM

Me? Why, my name's Ector—Tom Ector. I'm a cowman, from over the line—in New Mexico.

TOLLIVER (*eating ravenously*)
First time here?

TOM

Yep! *(He comes over and leans against the bar.)* On my way down from Las Vegas. Any more questions, Mr. Fat?

TOLLIVER *(reaching his hand across the bar)*

Well, check up, Mr. Ector. My name's Tolliver. The boys call me "Skeet." I'm from San Antone—an' I'm proud to make your 'quaintance. *(He shoves a bottle to TOM.)* Have a shot?

TOM

Thanks. Didn't know how to take ye at first. *(Pouring a liberal drink.)* But you're some good-natured yearlin'. *(He drinks heartily, smacks his lips and lays a coin on the bar.)*

TOLLIVER *(motioning the money back)*

Not for that 'un—'less you want another.

TOM *(jovially)*

Sho're! Join me?

TOLLIVER

Sworn off. Had to cut it out.

TOM

You—cut it out—why?

TOLLIVER

Oh, 'cause I was reducin' the supply in the State of Texas.

TOM

Kindda thoughtful, Slim. *(He takes a second, and puts the glass down with a thud, making a wry face.)* Well, what you left ain't no angel water; but anything to wash the sand out'n a feller's throat.

TOLLIVER *(indicating a plate)*

Have some? More back there.

TOM *(scrutinizing the dish)*

None o' that "Mex" fer mine.

TOLLIVER

All the more fer me, then. You know, somehow, I'd rather eat than drink.

TOM

You look it.

TOLLIVER

How far d'ye come?

TOM *(scanning him carefully as he eats)*
From Eddy—crossed the State line at Jumpin' Bear Creek.

TOLLIVER

How's the tally up North?

TOM

Cattle at a standstill—hoofs growin' roots.

TOLLIVER

Well, now, that makes me powahful sad to hear.

TOM *(studying TOLLIVER, evidently uncertain about him)*

'Bout the only sizeable game that's been pulled off lately—

TOLLIVER *(interrupting, as he carelessly reaches into his shirt front again)*

Not another brandin' of mavericks on a big scale?

TOM

No. Santa Fe Express held up—the other night.

TOLLIVER

Santa Fe Express—held up? Where?

TOM

Pecos Valley Branch—just out of Roswell.

TOLLIVER

You sinful liar! *(He laughs and rolls a cigarette coolly, realizing that TOM is watching him closely.)* Train robbery, nowadays—throw off your hobble, man. You can't rawhide me.

TOM

Cost the Wells-Fargo outfit eighty-five thousand dollars, just the same.

TOLLIVER *(sliding off the bar stool)*

Eighty-five thousand? Didn't know there was that much money in the whole of New Mexico.

TOM

Every sheriff in the State and all the railroad detectives're burnin' bear grass on the trail, right now.

TOLLIVER (*producing another bottle*)
Have another, *hombre!* (Tom *nods*
and pours a drink.) About this here
hold-up—now I see you're serious—
what gang done it?

TOM
No gang. A plum-sumptuous, single-
handed job. But they got the maver-
ick's number.

TOLLIVER
Must 'a' been careless-like. Well,
what low galoot was he?

TOM
Messenger's still foggy—but the con-
ductor saw him.

TOLLIVER
Saw him, eh? (*He laughs good-*
naturedly.) I wouldn't give a plugged
nickel fer what any feller remembers
'bout a hold-up. Now, this train rob-
ber—what's his ticket?

TOM
Sort o' slender—purty well built—
'bout my size. (*Leaning toward* TOL-
LIVER.) Ain't been any stranger here
today?

TOLLIVER
Lookin' fer 'im, eh? Nope, you're the
only stranger through here, Mr. Ector.

TOM
Say, Mr. Skeet, ain't this the Double
Bar S Ranch?

TOLLIVER (*as if taken by surprise*)
Er—yes—sure. Why?

TOM
Just the place fer a stray maverick to
hide, 'cordin' to your burnt hair reputa-
tion, 'cross the line. Who's runnin' the
shebang now?

TOLLIVER
The Old Man.

TOM
So "Cayuse" Chaffee's still on it.
Heard he made a good clean-up lately—
ten thousand or so, in real cash. (*He*
strays over toward the safe.)

TOLLIVER
Now, I savvy why you been makin' a
few mental notes of that safe.

TOM (*laughing bluffly*)
Always willin' to sit in on most any
little game. Well, what you got to say
'bout it, Mr. Fat?

TOLLIVER
Nothin'. (*He steps to the safe and*
throws back the door, showing it to be
empty.) But you surely didn't think
the Old Man'd leave ten thousand
down here—with just me?

TOM
Empty? Well, you look big enough
to take care of it.

TOLLIVER
I'm the original white-winged angel
of peace.

TOM
Sho're the Old Man took that money
away? Where is he?

TOLLIVER
With the boys, up at the Peak—
attendin' to a little spring business.

TOM
Wet blanket work, eh? Brandin' over
old cows. This certainly is a great hole
in the wall. Just the place fer a train
robber to hide.

TOLLIVER (*putting his hand in his shirt*
front again)
Didn't I say there was no stranger
here but you, Mr. Ector?

TOM
Aw, you've probably been asleep.
Say, got a long han'kerchief 'bout you?

TOLLIVER
Yep. (*He pulls a red bandanna from*
his pocket.) Why?

TOM (*leaning on the bar*)
Friend Tolliver, would you help me
out—in a tight pinch?

TOLLIVER

If there ain't no shootin'. What is it, Mr. Ector?

TOM (*walking to the opening and looking off right and left*)

You're right. I got here first. (*Looks off at the right again.*) A hunch—it's my man.

TOLLIVER

Some'un comin'? (*TOM nods slowly.*) Not the varmint what held up the train? More likely one of our boys. Still, if you're sure— (*Approaching hoofbeats are heard.*)

TOM (*looking off at the right again*)

Sho're? Ten thousand—dead or alive. An' a thousand of it's your'n, Fat, if you stand by the door here—an' grab one arm, as he comes in. I'll 'tend to the other.

TOLLIVER

Yes, an' he'll take a good shot at me, if I happen to miss that hand. (*The hoofbeats grow louder.*)

TOM

Why, yo're big enough to lick a dozen like him. Now lay flat against the wall an' we'll bag him like a rabbit.

(*TOLLIVER and TOM press closely against the wall, right and left, just inside the door. A horseman is heard to rein up and dismount, unseen. DICK appears in the opening, looks about cautiously, then enters warily. He is smaller than the others, jauntily dressed in complete cowboy outfit. On passing into the room, TOLLIVER and TOM jump on him. He struggles vainly against the two, who pinion him down by the arms.*)

DICK

Look out, you danged hoss wranglers! What d'ye mean?

TOM (*thrusting a gag into DICK's mouth*)

That's enough out'n you! Here, Skeet, give me the other hand—an' pull his fangs while I rope 'im.

TOLLIVER (*taking DICK's guns*)

An' this little squirt held up a train? I could 'a' hobbled him, myself.

TOM

We'll just knot you down with a stakeline, Mr. Robber, that you don't run wild. (*He ties DICK to a chair, picking up a rope from the floor.*)

TOLLIVER

Better hog-tie him an' unshell those guns. I know his kind—small but can blow your head off as quick as anyone else.

TOM (*sneeringly, to TOLLIVER*)

What's a big boob like you know 'bout killing?

TOLLIVER

Not much—haven't been cookin' very long yet.

TOM (*to DICK*)

Now, listen to me, you underslung two-year-old: sit still or I'll pump you so full o' holes—you'll look like a collender.

TOLLIVER (*to TOM*)

Better have a drink on our short friend—after the round-up. (*TOM steps to the bar and pours a drink.*) Your man—all right?

TOM

Sho're—an' I'm glad we got 'im like a wing-broke hawk.

TOLLIVER

Thought you said that train robber was 'bout your size.

TOM

Naw. I said he looked somethin' like me.

TOLLIVER (*looking from DICK to TOM*)

You got fine opinion o' your beauty, frien'.

TOM

Lucky you smiled, Mr. Skeet, or I might 'a' taken you wrong. I want you to know I'm sheriff of Chaves County.

TOLLIVER

Where's that?

TOM

Over the line, where Roswell is—the place this chipmunk held up the train. My star! (*He exposes his badge. With*

THE SMART SET

that DICK tries to rise in his chair and make a demonstration of protest; Tom threatens him into silence.) I guess you don't think I mean business!

TOLLIVER

Well, now you've bagged 'im—what you goin' to do?

TOM

Don' know whether the company want 'im delivered in Roswell er El Paso—an' I ain't got no requisition.

TOLLIVER

Requisition, hell! Take 'im over the line anyway. Then I'll get that thousand.

TOM

With his gang o' rattlers layin' away in the pass? I may be a sheriff, Skeet, but I got some sense left. Now if you expect to get that thousand—

TOLLIVER

Expect?

TOM

You'll have to keep 'im here over night—till I get back in the morning.

TOLLIVER

Where you amblin' to meanwhile?

TOM

To the nearest telegraph. I'll wire in fer instructions an' be back tomorrow.

TOLLIVER (*feigning alarm*)

An' leave him here with me, all alone, over night? What about those shifty friends o' his up there?

TOM

Never think of him bein' down here. Say, Tolliver, how much money in the drawer?

TOLLIVER

'Bout a dollar "Mex"—'ceptin' what the Old Man left to pay the chuck bill at Sierra Blanca.

TOM

Well, I need some money tonight to bring my posse over. Stake me five hundred out'n what you got.

TOLLIVER

Five hundred? Say, Sheriff, what you think we live on—canned stuff? (*Taking a roll from his pocket*) Here's all Chaffee left me—three hundred.

TOM (*taking it*)

Thanks. Give it back to you tomorrow—sure pop.

TOLLIVER

But never again take us fer the First National Bank of El Paso County.

TOM

Adios, Mr. Fat—I'm off. Plug 'im if he gets too contumacious.

TOM (*noticing TOLLIVER's saddle on the peg at the back*)

Funny saddle up there. Bags purty full, too.

TOLLIVER

Belongs to one of our outfit. Bags're full of penoche.

TOM

Penoche? Always knew you were a queer lot down here—but the idea of a cowboy with his saddle bags full of Mexican candy!

TOLLIVER

Fellow read some fool magazine yarn that said he'd stay thin if he'd munch sugar.

TOM (*looking at TOLLIVER dubiously*)

Well, you ought 'a' try some of that yourself. Be back 'bout noon tomorrow, Skeet. (*He goes out.*)

TOLLIVER (*to DICK, who is struggling in his chair*)

Didn't ye hear the Sheriff say ye'd better keep quiet, Mr. Runt? Don't ye know when yo're caught, roped an' thrown? What's the matter? Wantta smoke? (*DICK nods.*) I'll roll a cigarette fer ye. (*After looking out he removes DICK's gag.*)

DICK

Of all the locoed sheep herders, you beat the bunch.

TOLLIVER

Now, look here, the councils o' war don't call fer no such language from pris'ners.

DICK

Prisoner, hell! If you'd 'a' given me half a chance, I'd 'a' told you when I came in.

TOLLIVER

What're ye gittin' at?

DICK

Mean to say you really don't know what's up now?

TOLLIVER

Sho're I know. Yo're nabbed—fer robbin' the Sante Fe. You certainly got nerve!

DICK

You mangle-eared seahorse—yo're plumb dotty! I'm the Sheriff, an' my name's Ector—Dick Ector, of Chaves. Now cut me loose, quick.

TOLLIVER

You the Sheriff? Why, the other feller said—

DICK

He's "Stakerope Harry," the train robber.

TOLLIVER

Him? (*He steps back to the opening and looks down the road; then turns to DICK.*) Say, you don't expect me to swallow ev'ry "hop an' John" story you can make up—just because I'm fat, peace lovin' an' good-natured?

DICK

An' yo're not goin' to spring me loose?

TOLLIVER (*his face brightening, as if getting a happy thought*)

Tell you what I will do. I'll give you a drink. (*He fills a small glass.*)

DICK

Don't want a drink—with my hands tied.

TOLLIVER

No? (*He pours the liquor back into the bottle.*)

DICK

What'd that feller, just now, say his name was?

TOLLIVER

Why, Ector—Sheriff of Chaves County, New Mexico.

DICK

An' he showed you some credentials, which incidently he stole from me.

TOLLIVER

Stoled?

DICK

Just reach into my inside pocket—you'll find a wallet an' some letters with my name on 'em.

TOLLIVER

No objections—providing you don't bite. (*He extracts the wallet and letters as directed.*)

DICK

When this guy got the drop on me, he knew I was the Sheriff—an' hot on his trail. (*As TOLLIVER studies the addresses*) Well, what d'ye find?

TOLLIVER

You can husk me if it ain't the level truth. There it is, black an' white—Sheriff Ector, Roswell, N. M.

DICK

Now, cut me loose, Mr. Skeet—er whatever your name is—an' I can be in the saddle after him in two minutes. Remember, he's got three hundred o' your'n.

TOLLIVER

The Old Man's. So you wantta hit the trail? How do I know your story's straight?

DICK (*exasperatedly*)

You fathead! Ain't you convinced yet I'm Sheriff Ector?

TOLLIVER (*starting to untie DICK*)

Me, a fathead, eh? Well, I'll show you. None o' my funeral if you're the Sheriff er not. (*Stopping suddenly*) But say, I forgot all about that thousand dollars I was to get, out of the reward.

DICK

I'll make it two thousand if you'll hurry. An' you'll get it, this time.

THE SMART SET

TOLLIVER (*loosening him*)
That's better.

DICK (*shaking himself*)
I'll catch him, all right. (*Walking to the bar*) Now for a drink, Mr. Tolliver.

TOLLIVER
Thought you was goin' to pop right into the saddle after "Friend Tom." (*He shows distinct disappointment as he pushes the bottle to DICK, who pours himself a drink.*)

DICK
Plenty o' time. How much money d'ye tell him you had?

TOLLIVER
Oh, that's what's keepin' you?

DICK
Well, I'm flat broke.

TOLLIVER (*producing a small roll of bills and tendering it to DICK*)

If it'll get you away any quicker, here's two hundred of my own; and that's all I have got.

DICK (*grabbing the money*)
Not much—but I can use it. That son of a prickly pear took every cent I had when he stuck me up. Sho're you haven't any more?

TOLLIVER
I certainly like your modesty.

DICK (*taking a scrap of paper from his pocket and scribbling on it*)

This last clinches it for you, Mr. Tolliver. Now you'll get the whole five hundred back. Here's a requisition on the State of New Mexico. Does that satisfy you?

TOLLIVER
No choice, Sheriff. Then, there's that two thousand out of the reward—but don't let me keep you too long.

DICK
I won't. Got no time to spare—if I hope to catch my bird before he gets to the pass.

TOLLIVER
Better look out fer that gang he mentioned hidin' up there, Sheriff.

DICK
No gang ever kept Dick Ector an' his man apart. (*He goes out.*)

TOLLIVER (*shouting after DICK*)
Don' forget my money, pard!
(*The door at the right opens slowly, and MIGUEL comes out stealthily; taken by surprise and forgetting his companion, TOLLIVER draws his gun from his shirt front for the first time.*)

MIGUEL
Don' shoot.

TOLLIVER
Oh, it's you! Better be careful about sneaking in that-a-way. Well, what d'ye want? I told you not to come until I called you. (*With MIGUEL, TOLLIVER is an entirely different man—brusque, blunt and almost domineering, while with strangers he seems diffident and almost afraid.*)

MIGUEL
Two fine horses in there, señor.

TOLLIVER
Good.

MIGUEL
Let us go now. (*Approaching hoof-beats are heard again, off at the right.*)

TOLLIVER
Someone else coming.

MIGUEL (*looking up the roadway*)
Not one of Chaffee's boys.

TOLLIVER
Must be another maverick. Now, you get in there (*pointing to the right*) and stay until I call you, this time.

(*MIGUEL slinks off. At the same time, HARRY appears in the roadway, just outside, mounted. He's an elderly man, having more of the typical stage sheriff appearance; grizzled hair, long cavalry mustache; a gun in his hand.*)

HARRY (*calling into the room*)
Oyez — oyez — hombre — Miguel!
Where are you, you confounded, lazy Mexican?

TOLLIVER

How are ye, stranger? Don' be so all-fired proud. Get off'n your hoss—come in—an' stay a while.

HARRY

Say, who are you?

TOLLIVER

Mr. Skeeter Tolliver, cook an' bartender of the Double Bar S Ranch—at your service.

HARRY

Then they've fired that gizzard-hearted Miguel. (TOLLIVER *nods*.) 'Bout time. It's six months since I've been over.

TOLLIVER

An' now you're here, won't you get off an' have somethin' to kind-a cheer you?

HARRY

Never drink—on duty. Who's that went down the road a minute ago?

TOLLIVER

That? Sheriff Ector, of Chaves County, across the line.

HARRY

The hell you say!

TOLLIVER

Lookin' fer 'im?

HARRY

I'm Ector — Harry Ector — Sheriff of Chaves County.

TOLLIVER

No? Well then, you're the third sheriff from that place been here today. What is this anyhow—a sheriffs' convention?

HARRY

Two of 'em ahead o' me. I thought so.

TOLLIVER

An' each one said his name was Ector. How many of you boys are there anyway?

HARRY

One—an' that's me! How long since the first duck left? (*As TOLLIVER hesitates*) Quick—no time to lose.

TOLLIVER

Not over ten minutes. Course you're after 'em?

HARRY

De-cidedly!

TOLLIVER

Oughtn't to have much trouble catchin' up with 'em. Both their hosses purty well stiffened.

HARRY

Ain't seen any other suspicious characters along this way, Fatty?

TOLLIVER

'Nary a one, Skin—'cept the other two members of your Tom, Dick an' Harry outfit.

HARRY

That'll do for you. Now which way'd they head—across the pass?

TOLLIVER

Started south, but said they was goin' to cut off at the Wild Horse Trail.

HARRY

I see—to the Texas-Pacific. (*Scanning TOLLIVER critically*) Say, friend, you haven't got any—

TOLLIVER

Nope, don' ask me fer a cent, Sheriff. 'Cause you're too late. Brother Tom and Dick helped themselves to all I had—just five clean hundred.

HARRY

I don't want money—but I will borrow a fresh horse. Chaparral Cock or Mesa Rose, the two nags old Chaffee forgot to return across the line—either one'll do.

TOLLIVER

You mean those fast 'uns. Say, I'm sorry, but the boss took both with him, up to the Peak, where the boys are doing a little delayed spring work.

THE SMART SET

HARRY

Oh, is that so? Well, you squatters that don't pay no taxes an' rustle everybody else's cattle—look out or some day the Rangers'll get you yet.

TOLLIVER

Better have a snoot o' Tarantula before you're off, Sheriff.

HARRY

Didn't I say I never touch it—on duty?

TOLLIVER

Country's sho're goin' dry when a Southwest sheriff refuses liquor—on any pretext. If you don't drink, Mr. Ector, will you have somethin' to eat? I'm powahful hungry.

HARRY

Not till I catch my man. An' as fer you, young feller, strikes me you don't need much nourishment. Yo're big enough already.

TOLLIVER

All the more reason, Sheriff—got more territory to feed.

HARRY

Well, ain't got any more time to waste. Don't forget to remind Mr. Chaffee that us officers across the line're keepin' a close eye on his kit.

TOLLIVER

A-huh.

HARRY

An' that some day some of his breed may be detained over there permanently—under the ground.

TOLLIVER

All right, Mr. Sheriff—go as far as you like.

HARRY

Sorry I didn't get one of them fast horses. I'd caught those train robbers sooner. (*To TOLLIVER*) Yo're certainly out of your element, young feller, here, in this bad man's land. Take my tip an' move on. S'long. (*He disappears off at the left.*)

TOLLIVER

Thanks fer the advice, Mr. Sheriff—I will. I'll move, right now. (*He calls*) Miguel—hey, *pronto*—you Mexican bean.

MIGUEL (*appearing*)

Si, señor.

TOLLIVER

Here, quick, help me get the saddle down. Penoché—eighty-five thousand dollars' worth! (*Laughing to himself*) Now, Miguel, go—get those horses ready. We'll leave at once. Too many visitors here. So get a wiggle on you. We're due in Mexico at daybreak, before any of those sheriffs get back.

MIGUEL

Muy bien, señor. (He disappears through the door at the right.)

TOLLIVER

So the conductor thought he was thin! A fine shadow I cast. (*He stands in the door and lights a cigarette*) Funny no one ever thinks a fat man would hold up a train.

CURTAIN.



A RUN of bad luck invariably exceeds the speed limit.



PURITANISM—A scheme for climbing into Heaven on the bare backs of sinners.

OUDEN

Par Georges Robert Degasches

SILENCIEUSEMENT triste, emmuré dans sa douleur, Ouden regardait, un soir, le soleil disparaître derrière un temple de l'Amour construit au bord d'un lac.

Une voix claire et gaie le tira brusquement de cette volupté qu'était pour lui sa douloureuse et intime rêverie. Une femme, sans qu'il s'en fût douté, l'observait, qui s'inquiéta des causes de sa tristesse.

Lui, simplement, attendit le sarcasme: Dès le collègue on l'avait surnommé Ouden; cette négation grecque lui convenait, parce qu'en effet, il "n'était rien" et ce nom était le sien, aujourd'hui qu'il était homme, comme alors.

Pour le tourner en dérision, il avait suffi de sa gaucherie naturelle, de ses cheveux roux, de ses yeux ronds, de son nez en bec d'aigle surmonté de lunettes, de cette tête bizarre, lente à raisonner et qui se balançait, ridiculement cocasse, à l'extrémité d'un cou mince et long.

Comme tous les hommes, Ouden possédait une âme; il pensait, il comprenait, il souffrait. Mais les pensées qui naissaient en lui, s'il les sentait frémir pour prendre leur envolée lorsqu'il se les disait à lui-même, restaient inexprimables; ses lèvres tremblaient, impuissantes, dès qu'il s'essayait à les traduire.

Tous l'avaient éloigné, sa famille elle-même, honteuse d'avoir comme enfant, cette chose. Sans amis humains, il vivait seul, et sans amante; dès qu'il osait aimer les regards se posaient sur lui, dédaigneux, et alors, il n'osait plus rien, finissant par se persuader qu'en effet, il était trop bête et trop laid.

Il s'était isolé des hommes, était devenu l'hôte des bois aux alentours de

Paris. Ouden y trouvait ses seuls amis, les oiseaux, les fleurs, les arbres, qui ne se détournaient pas, l'acceptaient au milieu d'eux en ne lui refusant ni leurs parfums, ni leurs chants. Il restait en leur compagnie, longtemps, et, dans l'atmosphère molle et tiède de l'été, le soir, tandis que de grandes ombres s'allongeaient sur la terre, comme personne ne le boyait, de grosses larmes montaient à ses yeux et souvent coulaient le long de ses joues . . .

Or, voilà qu'une femme l'interrogeait affectueusement!

Cet intérêt qu'on lui portait ainsi, brusquement, surprit Ouden. Il le suspecta. Mais la femme était jolie, elle semblait douce; sa voix était si câline lorsqu'elle lui demandait pourquoi il pleurait, qu'il crût en elle. Et puis, ses yeux étaient grands, bleus, si profonds qu'il pouvait s'y mirer. Elle rappelait à Ouden ces fées dont on lui racontait les histoires lorsqu'il était petit, tout petit, lorsqu'on l'aimait encore.

Et il se crut à côté d'une fée.

Il raconta sa jeunesse triste et ridicule, et l'infinie tristesse de sa vie. Il dit ses illusions, envolées, une à une; aucun bonheur ne pouvait maintenant venir le trouver (est-ce que le bonheur, du reste, était fait pour lui?) et il expliqua, simplement résigné, qu'il attendait la mort, pour le délivrer de sa souffrance.

Elle l'avait écouté sans l'interrompre; mais lorsqu'il se fut tu, sa voix harmonieuse prononça des mots qui le consolèrent, lui firent entrevoir des heures de joie. Ouden goûta délicieusement les paroles de cette femme, et sa pauvre âme dont personne, jamais, ne s'était occupé, sa pauvre âme triste, ivre et voluptueuse, se laissa bercer . . .

Ouden éprouvait de grands sentiments qu'il ne parvenait pas à analyser.

Il avait pour cette femme une sorte d'attachement religieux, aussi une passion ardente.

Il aurait voulu lui exprimer toute sa reconnaissance; mais aussi voulu lui dire. . . . Et il balbutia des phrases maladroites, indécises.

Elle, l'écouta sans se fâcher et sans rire.

Alors, il crut qu'il vivait. Sa poitrine aspira l'air fortement. Il n'était plus Ouden; il était quelqu'un: on l'aimait et, lui, pouvait aimer un être humain. Sa vie s'éclaira, il crut que tout lui souriait désormais.

Parfois, pourtant, un doute affreux l'étreignait. Il n'osait penser qu'après tant de rêves anéantis, le bonheur qu'il croyait vivre ne fût point un songe. Alors, il lâchait le bras de Jeanne, se plaçait en face d'elle, la regardait dans les yeux et lui demandait, l'âme soupçonneuse et tourmentée:

— Dis, est-ce bien vrai que tu m'aimes?

Elle, le lui affirmait, lui faisait des serments, lui prodiguait des menues caresses; Ouden croyait,

Le plus souvent, c'était tout ce qu'il disait. Il lui suffisait de se sentir avec Jeanne, de suivre son chemin. L'amour d'Ouden était simple et respectueusement silencieux.

C'était une après-midi, dans un de ces bois qu'il affectionnait. Il se promenait seul, l'esprit bercé par la Nature et tout enivré de ses rêves, lorsqu'il avait aperçu Jeanne au bras d'un homme.

Ouden fut empoigné par une passion qu'il n'avait jamais connue.

Il se coula dans les taillis pour essayer de surprendre leurs paroles.

Et il les entendit: l'homme reprochait à Jeanne de jouer la comédie, une infâme comédie d'amoureuse: elle se moquait d'une âme, le trésor le plus sacré.

Jeanne répondait qu'elle jouait la comédie, oui! mais qu'elle la jouait par bonté, qu'elle faisait du bien! que lui, ne comprenait pas, et qu'avec son âme d'homme, il ne pouvait comprendre.

En parlant, elle se blottissait si gentiment dans les bras de l'autre, elle avait l'air si heureuse, qu'Ouden n'osait pas bouger dans ses buissons, de peur de la déranger; il n'osait pas non plus se montrer, car il craignait de la contrarier. Tout ce qu'elle faisait était bien; lui, Ouden, ne devait pas comprendre pourquoi elle semblait aimer cet homme. Et il resta là, admirant Jeanne en silence, écoutant, stupide, leur conversation. Que lui importait qu'elle jouât avec les sentiments! Elle était bonne pour lui!

Mais tout à coup, Ouden entendit prononcer son nom. Il fut comme ébloui, puis il poussa un "han" sourd qui aurait voulu arracher son cœur.

. . . C'était sa dernière illusion qui s'en allait! Mais, après tout, Jeanne le traitait comme tout le monde; n'était-il pas Ouden!

Il venait de le comprendre, brusquement. Jeanne s'était laissée aimer "pour lui faire du bien," comme elle disait, "pour qu'il se figurât vivre heureux un instant!" Elle ne l'aimait point!

Il lui sembla qu'une masse s'abattait brutalement sur son cerveau, il ne sut plus rien . . .

. . . Et soudain, Ouden fut secoué d'un gros rire . . .

Il passa sur un pont, une nuit, et regarda les flots noirs qui roulaient, tumultueux. De leur profondeur, il lui semblait entendre une voix chantante qui l'appelait.

Il admira le ciel constellé d'étoiles, dont le reflet tremblait au fil de l'eau.

Puis il vit deux yeux, deux grands yeux bleus, si profonds qu'il pouvait s'y mirer et qui lui rappelaient ceux des fées dont les contes le berçaient lorsqu'il était petit, tout petit, et qu'on l'aimait.

Un autre souvenir vivait au fond de ces yeux; mais sa pauvre tête vide et folle ne le retrouvait pas.

Lentement, lentement, sa tête fléchit. Il étendit les mains vers ce visage qu'il avait déjà vu quelque part, . . . et brusquement, dans la nuit, on entendit une chute . . .

Un clapotis dans l'eau . . .

. . . Le fleuve, calme, continuait sa course.

THE RULES OF THE CURRENT PLAYS

By George Jean Nathan

THERE has been great discourse of late in the chess parlors as to whether or no playwriting can be taught.

The eminent post-prandial Cicero, Professor W. T. Price, that proud pasha of the yeas, discreetly forgetting that, in collaboration, he taught Roland Burnham Molineux to build what was indubitably one of the very worst specimens of playwriting revealed in this or any other season, has been hot at it splitting a lung for the defense. The good Harvarder, George P. Baker, amiable exhorter of the incipient Sardous of the species, glowing with the triumphant incubation of a Sheldon, has been quoted with fire and gusto by the faithful, that copious bund that somehow sees Baker in "Romance" in place of Hauptmann, Baker in "The Princess Zim Zim" in place of Maurice Donnay, Baker in "The Boss" in place of theatricalized Georges Ohnet—Baker generally in place of Bernstein. Nor have the mustaphas of the nay been less kings of the storm. The Reverend Dr. Bronson-Howard, a devoutly religious man, has laid about him with a grievous cudgel, flaying the dust into the playwriting pilgrims' eyes with aplomb and bidding them desist in their futile quest of the muse. Other playwrights, applauded by theatrical personages of more or less relevance, have balanced the negatory feather in their noses and performed nobly. And various newspaper critical gentlemen, bursting with sagacity, have interrupted our regular Sabbath devotions at the photographs of the physiology of Lillian Lorraine with

space-consuming arguments pro and con.

Now this question as to whether or not it may be possible to teach playwriting to some of our most popular American dramatists and other beginners—so far as we are here concerned—may continue to remain an open one. What engages my attention at the moment is the correlative, but seemingly overlooked, fact that, given a person sufficiently deficient in ideas, it should be a very simple matter to instruct him in the technique of theatrical, critical and commercial success whether he knows anything about playwriting or not. That is to say, the rules for achieving the sale of a play and for achieving the subsequent plaudits of press and public would seem in themselves to be so absurdly incomplex that it is a legitimate subject for amazement that notice has not more often been called to them. From time to time I have in these pages directed attention to the divers recipes in the cookbook to theatrical prosperity as such recipes were discovered for me by the plays of the day.

Thus, I have pointed out that a play in which a young city ne'er-do-well goes to live in the country and is made morally and financially whole again through the atmosphere and inspiration of the village is as certain of success as a play in which the proud heroine eventually discovers that "love has been born in her" for the cave man who has beaten her up in the second act. Thus, I have pointed out that a particularly bad play with a moss-eared plot stands nine

chances in ten of winning out if its author exercises the precaution to lay the scene in Manchester, England, or in one of the nearby Lancashire factory settlements, and that it is like the proverbial taking of candy from children to give the public and critics a play in which all Jews are proved to be angels. There is always room, too, for a play in which old age is shown sentimentally to be a wonderful thing (the older critics always fall for this one), and for a play that proves beyond all doubt how much a mother loves her child. The latter play cannot possibly fail if it contains a scene in which the mother is on trial in a courtroom. A farce in which a character hides in a chest after he has suddenly extinguished all the lights in the room and in which the hero wears a Norfolk jacket with a revolver conspicuously observable in one of the pockets is so certain of good fortune on the face of it that it does not even have to be written, or rewritten, by George Cohan—and as for any play in which the chief rascal and all the other lesser rascals are gradually reformed through the influence of a Good Woman!!

So, also, in the register of established sure things do we find the so-called religious play in which a group of venomous, warring, cheating, pessimistic humans slowly melt into so many cherubs before the calm and kindness and comforting words of a mysterious character only vaguely identified in program and dialogue. And so, too, the play in which a father and mother, estranged from each other, are ultimately reunited by their child, preferably, as Channing Pollock once remarked, a little daughter in her nightie. But safest of all these artless dodges is a decrepit, out-of-date, ingenuous play in which the dialogue has been altered from "Yes, Margaret is a pretty girl, the best-looker in Detroit," to "Aye, Mag's a bonnie lass, the bonniest wha lives i' all Drumtochty."

Enter, therefore, "KITTY MACKAY," by Catherine Chisholm Cushing.

Most American playwrights may sooner or later be divided into five classes: first, those who write Sardou's

"Divorçons"; second, those who write "Sis Hopkins"; third, those who write Brieux's plays; fourth, those who write Sudermann's "Magda"; and fifth, those who write "Cinderella." In the latter catalogue we now find Miss Cushing. Her "KITTY MACKAY" is merely Cinderella written thus: Cindérélla—which is to say, Cinderella with an accent. That Miss Cushing is one of my regular readers and deepest admirers I cannot but believe after an inspection of her play, for to ensure its success she has perspicaciously utilized not merely one of my frequently repeated rules, but as many as three or four. Thus, what she has done to achieve the critical and public eulogies is merely to adapt to her case my Rule XVIII (SMART SET, March, 1909) that "Success may always be gained in the theater with the story of the girl who is ill treated by her foster parents and who, no matter what her nationality, finally marries a wealthy young Englishman (who has been coveted by her stepsister) and then marches straight back home and, with much sweetness of nature, forgives those who abused her." And with my Rule XVIII, my Rule XXIV (SMART SET, January, 1910) that "A good 'genre' play may be obtained by laying the scene of any particularly bad play in an Irish, Scotch or Welsh village or British provincial town"; my Rule XXXIX (SMART SET, August, 1910) that "Dialogue, however stale and stupid, may be given the semblance of freshness and wit by translating it into any form of dialect, including the Scandinavian"; and my Rule XLI (SMART SET, April, 1911) that "The device of having the babies changed at birth, now beginning to be looked on with some disfavor in musical comedy libretti, should in due time therefore be excellent material for the popular legitimate drama."

Were it not for the circumstance that our patrons and appraisers of dramatic art are so consistently confused and led astray at the first smell of dialect and the sight of some scenery picturing a village somewhere in the British Isles, I should hesitate to call out the artillery against so otherwise harmless and in-

nocent an exhibit as this little play of Miss Cushing's. But recall the dumfounded awe with which the "Irish school of drama" was greeted a couple of years ago, the elaborate hysteria and befuddled gropings in the contemplation of the plays presented in the name of that "school." Recall the critical epilepsies, the critical hesitation waltzes, the critical Castle Walks, the general panic of the dramatic barristers, the great debates in the ale houses! Recall the eureka and golden opinions and benisons that were sounded in the pantheon when Githa Sowerby rewrote Mirabeau with a British provincial accent and when the late Stanley Houghton rewrote Max Dreyer and David Graham Phillips with inland inflections. Ah, me, what a hocus-pocus is on the world! Why this confounding of dialect with characterization, why this confounding of scenery with "drama of the soil"? The Scottish characters of "KITTY MAC KAY" are merely the conventional marionettes of the theater dressed in kilts; their loudly acclaimed "wit" (saving one legitimately humorous episode having to do with a revision of the Bible) is intrinsically nothing more than a substitution in the obvious American proscenium badinage of "naethin'" for "nothing," "about" for "about," "dinna ken" for "do not know," *u.s.w.*—the old trick of the club comic who gets a better effect out of a story by telling it in the negro tongue or in German dialect. In view of the reception of "KITTY MAC KAY," why wouldn't it be a profitable enterprise for some needy producer to present a version of some particularly out-of-date play such, for example, as "The Second Mrs. Tanqueray," with Aubrey made Angus MacTanqueray and Paula made Polly, and with the dialogue altered thus:

ANGUS

Is naethin' ever serious wi' ye, Poll?

POLLY

. . . We canna talk about that now, Angus.

ANGUS

But now, lass, life wi' be different wi' ye, wi' it not, m' bonnie one?

POLLY

Aye, an' it wi', Angus. But, mind ye, Angus, a' ways to keep me wi' ye and happy.

ANGUS

I wi' try, Polly.

POLLY

I canna endure more misery, Angus—I am a lassie wh' canna endure it!

ANGUS

I dinna want ye to, lass.

POLLY

Then take me wi' ye, Angus, awa' i' the Hielands, i' a wee sma' place ca'd Willowmere, i' Surrey. Oh, I'm sae awfu' happy, Angus, sae awfu' happy!

I give the suggestion gratis, with but one reservation. Whoever accepts it and produces the play must agree not to send me tickets to see it.

For his this season's moneymaker, Mr. W. Somerset Maugham has circumspectly gone to the safe proposition of the "cave man" and the walloped proud virgin. Mr. Maugham's name is on the program as the author of the play, although the latter contains so much "uplift" in its last act and such a fulsome eulogium of farm life that it sounds more to me like the work of the Curtis Publishing Company. Inasmuch as no man with a sense of humor ever beats a woman—for he knows perfectly well that he can get her to behave much more quickly with a fibre needle and phonograph record of Fritz Kreisler or with a couple of passages from Galsworthy's "Dark Flower" or with a sort of accidental dropping of a remark about some superb imaginary blonde—and inasmuch as a stage hero without a sense of humor is a chafing spectacle, I must confess that I am scarcely an appropriate person to render an unbiased view of such a sweetmeat as this Maugham thing named "THE LAND OF PROMISE." Where the late Professor Moody took the same theme and legerdemained it across the footlights through the exercise of a sheer scrivener's grace, and where the two young Americans, Goddard and Dickey, have manipulated the theme happily in terms of farce, where Strindberg and Brieux and a round dozen lesser Continentals have massaged the thesis

with basic purpose more or less rational, comes now into the marketplace this belated British manufacturer and presents his goods seriously, albeit from them he has painstakingly removed everything that made the theme in the countless other plays passable to the nostril. Inasmuch as my eavesdroppers bring me seemingly authentic news that Maugham made his play to order for the service of Miss Billie Burke and for no other reason, I feel justified in presenting the aspect of the "big act" of the piece as it practically meets the eye.

Remember first, that the leading role is Billie Burke, is intended by the playwright to be Billie Burke. Then consider: A raw, unwashed, unlettered lout of a farmhand, who has not seen a woman of even tenth-rate appearance in long years, reluctantly consents to marry Miss Burke. He marries her, takes her to his shack and, the moment they enter the door, and for no very definite reason, begins to show her how strong he is by making her wash the dishes and giving her a series of jolts and other physical fillips further to impress his manly nature upon her. There's vital psychology, big drama, for you, Algernon and Clarence! An awkward hired man who has not had a bath for six months and who never in his life has been privileged even to speak to a moderately likely baggage, would certainly humble a pretty, educated young girl instead of being himself sent to the mat, ashamed and stammering, before the merest glance of her eye! Oh, these "manly" dramatists, these "virile" scalawags! One might as reasonably expect a dirty Canadian laborer to resist the feminine allure of Billie Burke as to expect my proficient colleague Sherwin (or myself, for that matter) to resist a favorable notice to Julia Sanderson. It simply cannot be done. Although critics, we are still partly human. Much, therefore, as it grieves me in view of eyes like the sky above Coronado and hair like Florida oranges in ginger-ale, I must direct this Miss Burke's attention to the circumstance that "afternoon" is not pronounced "offternoon," "dear" not pronounced "dya," "girls"

not "garls," "earth" not "öth," and "box" not "bawx."

We find the genial J. M. Barrie now intriguing with surefire Item LVIII in the dramatists' guidebook, the play that proves beyond all doubt that a mother loves her child, together with the Item's Clause C regarding the advisability of inserting in the play a scene showing the mother on trial before the law. But the good and wise Barrie has usurped the Item only to poke fun at it, and this he has accomplished with much of the pleasant sentiment and much of the pretty wit that up to the last year or so had regularly been revealed at his pen's point. In travesty and kindly satire and in a four-act play that in reality is made up of four one-act plays, the playwright toys with the absurdities of the feminist movement, selecting as his protagonist a seraphic creature who has murdered a man in a railway carriage because her child had a bad cold and the brute insisted upon keeping the window open, said seraphic creature being subsequently put on trial and being defended by the contention that the crime was negligible inasmuch as the victim was—a golfer. "Not a professional, whom we all respect—but a fellow who did it for nothing."

This trial scene, with the entire court, defense and prosecution and presiding Justice and jury alike, all working in elaborate accord to free the comely prisoner, although of course intended as satirical burlesque and characterized by my critical confrères as "more extravagant even than 'Trial by Jury,'" "wildly and impossibly farcical" and "theatrical horseplay" is, after all, like so many things labeled theatrical burlesque, less burlesque than an actual exposure of things as they in like cases have been and are. Based as it was upon the comparatively recent trial of a smashing beauty in London, at which trial the lovely Circe's orbs wrought havoc with the judiciary, the trial of Leonora is intrinsically not a tremendous exaggeration of the celebrated hearing of our own Evelyn of the Baby Collar, our own Evelyn of the Little Blue Dress. As a sort of companion speech of graceful sentiment

to his Peter Pan's "when a new little baby laughs, its first laugh travels out over the world and breaks into a thousand pieces—and each piece turns into a fairy," and his speech of the wife in "The Twelve-Pound Look" as to the future of her children, we have in the current play the Justice's words to Leonora.

"You," says he, "are one of those round whom legends grow even in their lifetime. . . . This is the sort of thing you *might* have done had your little girl had a cold. And this is how we *might* have acted had you done it. . . . You are not of today—foolish, wayward, unself-conscious, communicative Leonora. The ladies of today are different and—wiser. But as we look longingly at you, we see again in their habit as they lived, those out-of-date, unreasoning, womanish creatures, our mothers and grandmothers and other dear ones long ago loved and lost—and as if you were the last woman, Leonora, we bid you hail and farewell."

The piece is ably presented by Miss Maude Adams and the Messrs. Arthur Lewis, Aubrey Smith (one of the few human leading-men), R. P. Carter and Morton Selten.

The impression I receive from the plays of Henri Bernstein is of an ignorant man possessed of a spectacular vocabulary. This Bernstein is and ever has been a maestro of mere noise, a virtuoso of drawing room thunders, a *primas* of scenic pishmince. A fourth or fifth-rater at best, he has been elevated to position in our commonwealth only because our critical peoples are such that they are unable to distinguish between being proficient in dramatic technique and being dramatic in proficient technique. The views of these persons are clearly reflected in a recently published volume of specious gibberish by one Charlton Andrews, called "The Drama Today," of the opinions in which the following is symbolic: "Mr. Augustus Thomas displays not only a high purpose but a mastery of dramatic technique so far attained by no other American, and as yet surpassed in England only by Pinero!"

Bernstein's plays bear the same relation to the drama of modernity that a well-made empty house bears to a home—architecture without life, architecture unoccupied by human beings, a substantial dwelling with the family off on a vacation, a Fifth Avenue residence closed for the summer. We Americans are critically a nation in the constant state of having just had three cocktails on an empty stomach. We are ever ready and eager to cheer the guesswork of the nearest press agent. We are the back-slappers of the cosmos, the have-a-drink conviviais of the world of art, the good fellows, the lodge brothers—and the come-ons. A mere press despatch from London or Paris announcing a new Mars in the dramatic heavens is enough to set our critics to a wild waving of verbs over the deep significance of the discovery. We welcome all artists but artists. Ask ten Americans which is the greater dramatist, Bernstein or Molnar, and the ten will tell you you surely must be joking. The same if you ask for a national comparison of the Irish Lady Gregory and George Birmingham, of the French Bataille and Donnay, of the German Kadelburg and Schmidt. The ten will guffaw—Birmingham a greater artist than the Lady, ha, ha; Donnay greater than Bataille, he, he; Schmidt greater than Kadelburg, ho, ho!

The latest clamor from Bernstein is entitled "THE SECRET," and, save for a subtle examination into the character of a woman possessed of a devastating and unreasoning jealousy, is the usual Act I, Third of July, Act II, Fourth of July, and Act III, Fifth of July—the usual obvious preparation for the explosion of the giant firecracker with the usual obvious explosion at the conventional moment and the usual obvious subsequent binding up of the wounds. The last act of the play, with its profuse peddling of forgiveness on the combined heads of the mob after everybody has beaten everybody else to a pulp, is only another instance attesting to the fact that Bernstein's mind is nothing but a theater in alcohol. Miss Frances Starr handles the principal role

adroitly and Mr. Belasco has mounted and directed the piece with his accustomed dexterity.

Let us for a moment interrupt a contemplation of the drama of the period and turn to something more instructive. That is, to "THE WHIRL OF THE WORLD," the cockle-warning new Winter Garden show. The theme of this auspicious exhibit, like the basic theme of the Barrie play, is the feminist movement, only in this instance it is treated seriously. As a consequence, we have the feminist movement here disclosed in all of its more important phases, the hoochee-coochee, the split, the wiggle and the wriggle, with the "punch" of the play coming at five minutes of eleven when all the girls walk out on a runway, extending from the stage all the way back to Toxen Worm, and prove conclusively that stomachs may serve other and more spectacular purposes in the world than a mere abode for aches. In a word, the show may be said to resemble "Hedda Gabler" in that most of its action takes place off the stage. A real music hall this Winter Garden—the superior of any in this country or abroad. And in it currently a real music hall show. In place of plot, Elinore, Lucille, Dot, Trixie, Vivian, Liani, Vera, Follie and Mazie, not too warmly clothed. In place of vocal bazaar, Lena, Ethel, Helen, Emily, Paulita, Grace, Lillian, Myrtle and Rena, undressed in resplendent Ellis costumes. In place of nonsensical "coherence," Alice, Virginia, Claire, Pearl and Nellie; in place of stupid "intelligible lyrics," Rosa, Roberta, Rossella, Mabel and Molly. Thus, and only thus, is a true music hall show to be derived.

Shortly after the curtain went up on Walter Hackett's "DON'T WEAKEN," a group of dear old college chums, eight years out of their dear old alma mater, sat down to play dear old poker. No sooner had they begun than the wives of two of them began singing one of their dear old college songs in the dear old next room. When the dear old sound of the dear old melody reached their dear old ears, the dear old college chums became profoundly moved. Tears peared

into their eyes and their voices became husky. "It's the dear old song, fellows," observed one of their dear old number. "Let's quit the game and go in and listen to it." Which the dear old college chums proceeded forthwith to do. And at the same moment, the play—even in the mind of anyone who had never been nearer college than Columbia University—proceeded forthwith to the dear old storehouse. To provide against any doubt as to the destination of his play, however, the author carefully followed up the advantage of his preface with such dramatic coups as a comic scene wherein a timid husband, after years of humble submission to his wife, courageously takes a couple of drinks, turns boldly upon the baggage and tells her what is what; as a scene wherein the hero, dejected and distraught, finds new inspiration to immediate deeds of daring in the person of the loving heroine; and as a scene wherein a green, cocky American business youth coolly and magnificently bluffs an experienced captain of industry and gains melodramatic control of the situation.

The difference between the play characters of George Bernard Shaw and the play characters of many of his contemporaries—the latter insult the intelligence of their audience; the former insult the intelligence of one another. Example: "THE PHILANDERER," imported theatrically this late in the day by Mr. Winthrop Ames. Inasmuch as, in the words of the exquisite Mencken, "every habitual writer now before the public, from William Archer and James Huneker to Vox Populi and An Old Subscriber, has had his say about Shaw," and inasmuch as "THE PHILANDERER" has long ere this enjoyed its full share of the general sapience, I hesitate today once more to set my own wits against the play. Whenever there is a dearth of subjects to write about, I am always prepared to entertain the populace with a couple of new and startling opinions about Mr. Shaw and his works, as I have found that, contrary to the belief of my amiable colleague and *bierbruder*, Burns Mantle, all one has to do to negotiate such brilliant critical

opinions about the Irishman is to utilize the method sagaciously employed by the good Max Beerbohm. This method consists in thinking up something sort o' clever—something that has absolutely nothing to do with the topic in hand—and then connecting the remark with the subject under discussion through a quotation of the words of some wholly imaginary philosopher or critic. Thus, a new expression of opinion on "THE PHILANDERER" might easily be brought about in the following manner:

A. (*the thinking up of the something irrelevant, but sort o' clever*)—Youth may be said to cease in an individual when he no longer enjoys walking in the rain.

B. (*the quotation of the wholly imaginary philosopher or critic*)—As Doctor Herman P. Eierfresser, the illustrious German commentator on the theater and author of that admirable and penetrating work, "Überbrettl' und Unterbrettl'," has observed: "To satirize a fad or current craze, playwrights almost invariably attempt to achieve their purpose through youthful characters. In these theatrical satires, the children are ever set satirically against their parents, never the parents satirically against their children. Why is this? Do older persons never succumb to fads and crazes? It would seem to me that a genuine satire of fads were best to be accomplished through such characters as would be supposed already to have grown circumspect and wary as to fads with age."

C. (*the consequent new opinion about "THE PHILANDERER"*)—Although Doctor Herman P. Eierfresser, the illustrious German commentator on the theater and author of that admirable and penetrating work, "Überbrettl' und Unterbrettl'," has observed that "to satirize a fad or current craze, playwrights almost invariably attempt to achieve their purpose through youthful characters, etc.," Mr. Shaw, in his satirical burlesque of the Ibsen mania which he calls "THE PHILANDERER," has generalized his satire by indicating, albeit indirectly, that, age or lack of age, youth may be said to cease in an individual only when he no longer enjoys walking

in the rain. That Shaw's older characters, Cuthbertson and Craven, were still youthful by the terms of this definition, is made rather clear by the dramatist through assigning to Cuthbertson and Craven professions which emphasize the necessity of, and consequent liking for, an exposure to the elements, to wit, the professions of dramatic critic and military man.

It's very simple. But as I have said, there are too many topics imperatively demanding my attention to permit my making an impression upon you by this means today. May one venture the query before parting, however, as to why Mr. Ames saw fit to produce this comparatively antiquated specimen of the Shaw art in an hour when such fresh dishes of the Irishman's wit as "Pygmalion," "Great Catherine" and "Androcles and the Lion" might have been procured? "THE PHILANDERER" was put on the London market in 1893. Probably it is Mr. Ames's belief that the American theatergoing public is not ready for a Shaw play until twenty-one years have elapsed from the time the play first appears in printed form. If this is Mr. Ames's belief, let me make haste to correct him. From the reception of "THE PHILANDERER," it must be plain to Mr. Ames or anyone else that the American theatergoing public is not ready for a Shaw play even then.

Making up for a program reticence regarding the divers sources of inspiration for his fantasy "A THOUSAND YEARS AGO," Mr. Percy Mackaye gratifies us with a buxom preface to the printed book of the play in which Carlo Gozzi, Karl Vollmöller, Jethro Bithell, Max Reinhardt, the Persian poet Nidhami, creator of the original Turandot fable, Schiller and Lee Shubert are one and all called together and awarded the Varsity letter. Although Mr. Mackaye has failed to invest this latest specimen of his craft with the same imagery and sparkle that have been a part of some of his earlier work—notably "The Scarecrow," he has yet contrived to give the old Oriental nursery tale a sufficient measure of life to direct it across the footlights. The scenic devices of Messrs.

Craig and Reinhardt are employed to good effect in the presentation and divide the credit of the evening with Mr. Mackaye. The general spirit of the play is to be suggested through the verses of Capocomico, leader of the exiled band of Italian "masks," Scaramouche, Punchinello, Pantaloon and Harlequin:

At home, half the world is dyspeptic
With pills of reformers and critics and realists.
Fun for its own sake?—Pho, it's old-fashioned!
Art with a mask on?—Unnaturalistic,
They warn you, and scowl, and wag their sad
periwigs.—

So we—the unmatched, immortal, Olympian
Maskers of Antic—we, troop of the tragical,
Symbolical, comical, melodramatical
Commedia dell' Arte—we, once who by thou-

sands
Enchanted to laughter the children of Europe—
Behold us now, packed out of town by the
critics

To wander the world, hobble-heel, tatter-
elbowed,

A-begging our way—four vagabond players,
And one master director—me, Capocomico!

And through his verses in retort to the
query as to why they have come hence
to China:

Because, my
Punchinello, in China there are no technicians
To measure our noses and label them false ones,
Or question our sub-plots and call them fic-
titious.

Here in China the world lies a-dream, like a
thousand

Years ago, and the place of our dreams is
eternal.

Here in China romance still goes masking
serenely

With dragons, magicians, clowns, villains and
heroes. . . .

The tailpiece threatens; we must
make haste. Remains no room to chat
entertainingly and at length about our-
self. Remains even no room to do com-
plete injustice to some of the plays that
cry for enlightening words from our
pencil. Remains no room but for meagre
summary. Therefore: "YOUNG WIS-
DOM," by Rachel Crothers—Marion Fair-
fax's "The Talker" prettied up for the
Sisters Taliaferro. "A LITTLE WATER
ON THE SIDE," by William Collier and

Grant Stewart—an amusing convention
of jokes and the Collier family. "OMAR,
THE TENTMAKER," by Richard Walton
Tully—four-fifths scenery (excellent)
and one-fifth play (awful). "ELIZA
COMES TO STAY," by H. V. Esmond—
a London play so bad its impor-
tation was assured. "MARIA ROSA,"
by Angel Guimera—familiar Spanish
peasant drama of love, hate, passion,
jealousy and dagger-plunging. "THE
HOUSE OF BONDAGE," a doleful, sleepful
dramatization of Reginald Wright Kauff-
man's fable of the poor white slave,
foisted on the community by that
peculiar and very mysterious enterprise
calling itself "the Sociological Fund of
the Medical Review of Reviews." "THE
DEADLOCK," by Margaret Turnbull—a
potpourri of Paul Bourget, Robert
Hichens and Charles Klein having to do
with the venerable question of love and
the church. "THE YELLOW TICKET,"
by Michael Morton—yellow Russian
melodrama *à la* Sardou, proving to the
ample satisfaction of the box-office that
(see Rule XIX) all Hebrews are the salt
of the earth and that (see Rule XX) all
Russians (excepting the Hebrew ele-
ment) are fiends in human form. "SARI"
—an intelligent and melodious Buda-
pest operetta by Emmerich Kalman, one
of the best presented to American audi-
ences in recent seasons. "THE QUEEN
OF THE MOVIES"—"Die Kino-Königin"
Englished, introducing the community
anew to the Irving Berlin of Germany,
Herr Jean Gilbert. "THE GIRL ON THE
FILM"—a London Gaiety show with-
out a London Gaiety chorus, hence
"Hamlet" with the Forbes-Robertson
left out. "IOLE"—dull libretto founded
on Robert W. Chambers's smart tale
of the same name. Music, by William
Frederick Peters, so clearly a mere
phonographic record of melodies by the
dean of native musical comedy compos-
ers that Mr. Peters, to borrow the
current argot, may be said to be the
man who put the Victor in Victor Her-
bert.



THE RAW MATERIAL OF FICTION

By H. L. Mencken

WITHOUT running any very grave risk of being posted publicly as a liar, one may venture to say, I take it, that, just as melody is the raw material of music, so the thing we call the story is the raw material of prose fiction.

In the most elemental forms of fiction, as in the most elemental forms of music, we get that raw material and nothing more. Sometimes, indeed, it is inherently so nearly perfect, both in substance and in pattern, that nothing more is needed. Thus it was a sure artistic instinct which led Mark Twain to tell the famous story of the jumping frog exactly as he had heard it from Old Ben Coon, the half-wit of Angel's Camp. The slightest attempt to augment and bedizen it, or, as the musicians say, to develop it, would have been ruinous to it. And thus it is that we are wholly satisfied, however richly nourished upon unresolved sevenths, by such homely songs as "Dixie," "Stille Nacht" and "Annie Laurie." They are as primitive as Aesop's Fables or the first book of Genesis, but nevertheless it is unimaginable that any reinforcement of their naked simplicity could improve them, or even fail to spoil them. At least one of the three—"Annie Laurie," to wit—is almost if not quite flawless as it stands, and hence it must be ranked with the greatest works of art that music can show.

But such perfection, of course, is quite as rare in art as it is in nature. The world has been producing songs innumerable for hundreds of years, and yet its "Annie Lauries" are still very few, and sometimes a quarter of a century goes by without any new one being added to

the stock. So with its great stories. Of such infrequency, in fact, are accessions here that it is common to say that all of the really great ones have been told. But meanwhile the demand for both music and tales—or, as we now say, novels—keeps up as strongly as ever, and very tempting rewards, both in money and in fame, are offered to whoever can meet it. Two avenues of approach to these rewards lie open to the ambitious fictioneer. On the one hand, he may throw all intelligible standards of merit to the winds, and devote himself to manufacturing new stories that are frankly bad, trusting to the fact that nine persons out of ten are utterly devoid of esthetic sense and hence unable to tell the bad from the good. And on the other hand, he may take stories, or parts of stories that have been told before, or that, in themselves, are scarcely worth the telling, and so encrust them with the ornaments of wit, of shrewd observation, of human sympathy and of style—in brief, so develop them—that readers of good taste will forget the unsoundness of the material in admiration of the ingenious and workmanlike way in which it is handled. The authors of the first of these classes achieve the mawkish romances and incredible detective stories which leer at us from all the book counters. The authors of the second class achieve such things as "Tom Jones," "Huckleberry Finn," "Barry Lyndon," "Germinal" and "The Brothers Karamazov."

It is in music, however, rather than in fiction, that this triumph of skill over materials is best to be observed, and in music, again, that the occasional failures of the process are most striking. The

opening movement of the greatest orchestral work ever written, Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, has nothing at the bottom of it save a little melody of two tones, one of them three times repeated—a melody so childishly simple that one has to stretch the meaning of the term to call it a melody at all. And yet, out of that austere material, Beethoven constructed a piece of music so noble and so beautiful, so rich in imagination and so lofty in style, that it remains today, after more than a century, a masterpiece that no other man has ever equalled, and that few have even so much as approached. But this same Beethoven, in the symphony immediately following, made a failure almost as noteworthy as his success in the incomparable Fifth. Here, in the so-called Pastoral, he started out with a melodic idea of decided grace and charm—in other words, with what seemed to be excellent material—but when he essayed to embellish and develop it, his usual resourcefulness failed him, and all he managed to do was to repeat it over and over again, with inconsiderable changes in tonality and instrumentation. The result was a composition which remains famous to this day, despite many beauties in its other movements, chiefly for its forbidding monotony. It is hard hearing, just as certain books by undoubtedly competent authors are hard reading.

All of which may well serve as overture to a few discreet remarks upon the subject of Joseph Conrad, an artist who falls far short, perhaps, of the Beethoven stature, but is still a fair match for—well, let us say Brahms. Like most other great novelists, Conrad belongs to the second of the two classes of story tellers that I mentioned a moment ago. That is to say, his actual story, thrilling though it may be, is always a great deal less important than the way he tells it. It is what he thinks about it and says about it, and in particular, the great laws of conduct and destiny that he sees within and behind it, that make it on the one hand a work of art and on the other hand a profound study of human motive, instinct and

emotion. The uncanny fascination of "Typhoon," for example, does not lie in the storm which batters the steamship *Nan-Shan*, nor even in the melodramatic battle which goes on among the terrified Chinamen in her hold, but in the action and reaction of these external phenomena upon the muddled mind of Captain MacWhirr. The whole of that colossal tragi-comedy, indeed, is played out there. MacWhirr himself is not only the stage of the play, but also the entire stock company. And it is because Conrad is able to imagine clearly every move in so fantastic and rarefied a drama, and to make it comprehensible and poignant to the reader, that he earns the respect which belongs to a first-rate artist.

As I have said, the mere story, to such a novelist, is of secondary importance. The thing he demands of it is not that it be novel and enthralling in itself, but that it lend itself readily to artistic development, and be fruitful in situations which offer opportunity for elaborate psychological exploration. Just as Beethoven, in the Fifth Symphony, began a fragment of tune so primitive that it scarcely had any separate existence at all, so Conrad is in the habit of using the most commonplace materials of melodrama. At the bottom of "Falk" you will find nothing more than the old, old story of the shipwrecked sailors who fight for the last crust and then proceed to devour one another. And in "Heart of Darkness," again in "An Outpost of Progress," again in "Almayer's Folly," again in "An Outcast of the Islands," and yet again in "Lord Jim" the fable is the simple one of the white man who sheds his civilization when thrown among savages. Here, in truth, Conrad has used the same story, or what is substantially the same story, no less than five times—and it appears as a sub-motive, as it were, in still other of his tales. So again, in "The Secret Agent," "Under Western Eyes," "Nostromo," "Youth," and "The Nigger of the Narcissus": the primary material is conventional blood and thunder, and in other hands it would probably make us smile. But in Con-

rad's hands it becomes the warp and woof of a fabric so complex and yet so delicate that the stuff out of which it is made is forgotten and we stand enchanted before the marvelously beautiful pattern. Such a story as "Youth," told by an O. Henry, or even by a Kipling, would be nothing more than an exciting story. But told by Conrad it is at once a subtle philosophy of life and a stately poem, with something in it of the eternal wisdom of Ecclesiastes and something of the surge and thunder of the Odyssey.

Obviously, there are dangers attending the use of this method, for the moment the author begins to lose his grip on his story it becomes an empty and a tedious thing. How Beethoven slipped into platitude in the Pastorale we have seen; a hundred other musical examples might be drawn from the works of Schubert, Mendelssohn, Tchaikovsky and even Wagner, to say nothing of the Italians. And among the novelists there are many who suffer intermittently, and a few almost chronically, from attacks of the same depressing banality—for instance, Edith Wharton and Arnold Bennett among the former, and Eden Phillpotts and Gerhart Hauptmann among the latter. Even Conrad, like Meredith and Zola before him, has his off days, his times of clumsy floundering, his haltings upon intellectual dead centers. At such times a novelist is thrown, so to speak, upon his manner. That is to say, he has to go through the motions of saying something without actually having anything to say. The result is inevitably painful to the faithful reader. He gets a specious effect of profundity, a sonorous and deceptive soothing. He is ready, and even eager, to believe that he is being led down tortuous and enchanting paths. But the truth is, of course, that he is standing stock still, or rather, revolving like a teetotum, and after a while his head begins to swim and his knees to give way, and he presently falls into a fitful and unrefreshing slumber.

Something of this aching emptiness is to be met with in the latest of the Conrad novels, "CHANCE" by title (*Double-*

day-Page), or, at any rate, in its first hundred pages or so. Here we have the Conrad manner at its worst, and with no compensating richness of matter. The author hides a story within a story, and then turns aside from that second story to tell an irrelevant third story. Chapter after chapter is given to plating the psychological charts of Mr. and Mrs. Fyne, brother-in-law and sister to the redoubtable Captain Roderick Anthony, despite the plain indication, from the very start, that the main business of the chronicle is to be with the Captain, and not with the Fynes. And in the same way we are introduced with the utmost elaborateness to one Captain Powell, whose only visible function, at least for a long while, is to impede and obscure the progress of events. In the end, true enough, it is seen that each of these persons has had a considerable influence upon the life of Anthony, but the point I wish to make is that the part they are to play is but dimly foreshadowed in the earlier portions of the story, and that in consequence their doings take on an air of irrelevance. In brief, Conrad proceeds to his development section before he has clearly given out his themes, and that habit makes for chaos in the novel quite as surely as in music.

The actual story, like that of "Lord Jim," is plain melodrama. Captain Anthony, who is master and part-owner of a sailing ship, falls in love with Flora de Barral, the only daughter of a ruined financier. De Barral has been sent to prison and Flora is at the mercy of atrocious relatives. She is by no means in love with Anthony, but in order to escape these relatives she marries him and goes to sea with him. When her father is released from prison, he, too, is taken aboard the ship. Old De Barral, his mind a bit unbalanced by his downfall, takes a violent dislike to Anthony, and insists upon regarding him as the jailer of Flora. Finally he goes to the length of trying to poison Anthony. His intentions are discovered, and, panic-stricken, he swallows the poison himself. The cause of his death is concealed from Flora, and Anthony chivalrously offers to release her. But meanwhile she has

fallen in love with him and is eager to become his wife in fact as well as in name. Thereafter they live happily, traveling up and down the world, until Anthony loses his life in a shipwreck.

Out of these simple materials, so familiar to all students of the "Seaside Library" of thirty years ago, Conrad has fashioned a characteristically complex and searching piece of fiction. Exasperatingly mystifying at the start, it gathers clarity as it goes on, and in the latter half is some of the best writing that he has done since "The Mirror of the Sea." Is it only by coincidence that this increase of momentum comes with the departure of Anthony and Flora on their first voyage? I am inclined to see a greater significance in the fact. The story, true enough, is scarcely to be called a sea story. All that goes on aboard the ship *Ferndale*, or, at least, all that is essential to the tale, might have been made to occur with equal probability in a house ashore. But the first breath of ocean air seems to give Conrad, in some occult manner, a new grip upon his characters. After all, the fact is perhaps not strange. The sea is his element; the whole of his youth was spent upon it; its mark is upon all the ideas and impressions that make up his literary stock in trade. He has written superb land stories—setting aside "The Secret Agent" and "Under Western Eyes," there is always "The Point of Honor"—but the things that lift him wholly above his contemporaries, and give him what would seem to be a secure place in the front rank of English novelists, are his incomparable tales of the sea—"Falk," "Typhoon," "The Nigger of the Narcissus," "Lord Jim." Here, indeed, are masterpieces for you. Here a true genius is spinning yarns.

But not, of course, simple yarns—not yarns as yarns are ordinarily understood. The fascination of a Conrad story lies, not in its merely narrative elements, but in its interpretative elements. "My task," said Conrad once, "is, by the power of the written word, to make you hear, to make you feel—it is, before all, to make you *see*." And what he makes us see is precisely what is least upon the

surface—the subtle play of forces in the dim region of human motive and emotion, the inordinately tangled reactions between will and environment, the blind and irresistible play of the cosmic currents. He is a psychological polyphonist, an explorer of strange disharmonies, of startling progressions, of inexplicable overtones. All this, of course, explains the difficulty he presents to the idle novel reader, and even to the reader of more serious purpose. He is so intent upon the remoter effects and implications of his story that he sometimes allows the story itself to lose direction and clarity.

The same phenomenon is a familiar one in music: how often, indeed, do we see a composer involve himself in unintelligible snarls of sound in his free fantasia! The device employed to help out the baffled hearer might help out the baffled reader, too. Why not print a sort of thematic analysis before each of the Conrad novels, clearly marking off its main outlines? What an aid that would be to the comprehension and enjoyment of "Lord Jim"! As it is, the Conradian neophyte must read it twice to get at its true greatness—once to gather in the bare substance of the story, and once to search out the extraordinarily twisted and elusive paths of its inner content. The second reading is a joy, but the first must needs be somewhat arduous. Why not avoid the necessity for it by setting forth the author's principal materials in advance, as Sir George Grove has set forth those of Beethoven and a host of commentators those of Wagner? I throw out the suggestion and no more. Perhaps it may help Conrad's publishers to that popularization of him which they plan.

Now for a long plunge from the Matterhorn to the Piedmont plain, from Conrad and his eerie harmonics to the honest major chords of the best-sellers. I am not one to revile lightly the manufacturers of these so-fleeting fictions. It takes a high order of skill, though perhaps not a noble order, to do it acceptably. Many are called, but few are chosen. For every novice who tries to imitate Conrad, there are fifty who try

to imitate Richard Harding Davis and hundreds who play the sedulous ape to Robert W. Chambers and Harold MacGrath. And yet, for all that competition, these tried masters hold the trade. Here is MacGrath with a new and good one—and here are E. Phillips Oppenheim, George Gibbs and all the rest of the semi-annuals at his heels. Twice a year they suffer the throes of composition and twice a year they rake in the shekels.

The spring Oppenheim, "A PEOPLE'S MAN" (*Little-Brown*), introduces us to a terrible Socialist named Maraton, who first stirs up the common people of the United States, and then crosses the Atlantic and stirs up the common people of England. On page eleven he meets the beautiful Lady Elisabeth Landon, niece to the Prime Minister, the Right Hon. Mr. Foley; on page 365 they are leaving the House of Commons together in a coupé and—"with a little cry her head sank upon his shoulder, and his arms closed around her." Maraton, it appears, has lost most of his terrors in the interval; he and Mr. Foley, in fact, are now preparing to save the common people shoulder to shoulder. The MacGrath book, "DEUCES WILD" (*Bobbs-Merrill*), is small but chock full—a sort of *précis* of all the best-sellers since "St. Elmo." It has its rich and handsome artist, its burglar in dress clothes, its ruby that belonged to the Nana-Sahib, its beautiful young woman with red hair, and its radium-nosed detective. But if you think that it is dull, warmed-over stuff, then, my dears, you think wrong. This Mr. MacGrath is no blacksmith. He writes deftly, amusingly, bouncingly. He knows how to tell a bad story well. He is even able to poke a bit of sly fun at it in the telling.

In "MADCAP," by George Gibbs (*Appleton*), there is another artist, but this time he is anything but handsome. Nevertheless, he is a fascinating fellow, and so young Hermia Challoner, rich and beautiful, makes a dead set for him. On page 342, after a long, earnest and, it must be said in fairness, entertaining chase, she catches one of his hands in hers and holds it close to her

heart, and he gives her his solemn word that there was never anything to mention between himself and the Countess Olga Tcherny, and that the rice powder once visible upon his coat, though undoubtedly from the Countess's face, was wholly without amorous significance. In "MOLLY BEAMISH," by H. de Vere Stacpoole (*Duffield*), we have a workmanlike (and quite unblushing) variation upon the theme of Booth Tarkington's "Beaucaire." Imagine how those shrews and snobs of Bath sit up when the scorned Molly Beamish sweeps out of My Lady Dexter's drawing room upon the arm of young Mr. Jerningham, a fugitive from justice no longer ago than this very morning, but now, of a dizzy sudden—Marquis of Blagdon! Suave, sweet stuff! More sweetness is in "THE JACK-KNIFE MAN," by Ellis Parker Butler (*Century Co.*), wherein we meet a genial ne'er-do-well who adopts a little crippled orphan, and in the last chapter is married by the Widow Potter for his pains. And in "THE POISON BELT," by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (*Doran*), there are thrills. Our old friend, Prof. Challenger, of "The Lost World"—the earth passing through a belt of poisonous gases—millions keeling over, apparently dead—Challenger saving himself and his friends with draughts of oxygen—what a tale, indeed!

Of "THE WHITE LINEN NURSE," by Eleanor Hallowell Abbott (*Century Co.*), there has been much bitter whispering in the newspapers, chiefly against its strange combinations of adjective and noun. One critic, it appears, broke down and wept when he came to "romantic smell" and "giggling brook." What he did when he struck "skittish young violets," "plunging heart" and "sweaty soul" we can only guess. But as for me, I must confess shamelessly that such novelties give me far more of genial tickling than of anguish. I can stand the unrelated triads in "Der Rosenkavalier," and I can stand the gipsy phrases in "The White Linen Nurse." As a matter of fact, they kept the book in my hand long after I had lost all interest in the actual story. That story is sentimental and improbable

stuff. The senior surgeon of a great hospital, widowed and with a crippled child on his hands, proposes marriage to a hysterical trained nurse while the two of them are crawling out of a wrecked automobile. He scarcely knows the lady's name (it is the forbidding one of Rae Malgregor), but as he says himself, his profession is one which trains a man to quick and fatal decisions. She consents almost at once and they are duly married—and he proceeds straight from the church door to the Canadian wilds, where he goes upon his annual drunk of thirty days, the only recreation of his busy life. On page 200 he returns from this honeymoon a *cappella* with his nerves in rags; on page 266 he and Rae discover that they love; on page 275 they depart upon a second honeymoon—together. Nothing here to bulge the eye; nothing worth hearing about; nothing even new. But this Miss Abbott has a style all her own, gay, unconventional, bizarre. In a day of undistinguished writing, it stands out sharply and pleasantly. For it I am glad to forgive her for many things, including a howling "whomever" on page 174.

Books of an agreeable mediocrity are plentiful this month. I glance through a dozen or more of them without finding anything worthy of either high praise or unqualified blame. In "RUTH ANNE," by Rose Cullen Bryant (*Lippincott*), there is another trained nurse—this time an opulent young woman who takes to the hypodermic and the clinical thermometer, not in the hope of snaring a doctor or a patient, but out of a desire to serve suffering humanity. Naturally enough, it gives her a shock to discover that this serving of humanity has been turned into an everyday trade by its practitioners, and that a good many of them are careless and even cynical workmen. One night a fever patient is allowed to commit suicide through lack of watchfulness and Ruth Anne leaves the hospital in disgust. But thereafter, it appears, her passion for the uplift

undergoes a considerable cooling, for on page 319 we find her proposing marriage to one Dr. Hollander, whose "rugged figure" is "severe and stern in every outline," but who is a very nice man for all that. A third priestess of service is to be found in "MOTHERING ON PERILOUS," by Lucy Furman (*Macmillan*). This one goes into the Kentucky mountains and there takes charge of a settlement school. She finds the business of civilizing the mountaineers a very difficult one, but she sticks to it gamely, and as we take leave of her she is still at it.

"DESERT GOLD," by Zane Grey (*Harper*), and "LAHOMA," by John Breckenridge Ellis (*Bobbs-Merrill*), are both tales of the great wide West, and in each you will find Indians, bad men and lovers. "THE DESIRED WOMAN," by Will N. Harben (*Harper*), shows us how Dick Mostyn, a buccaneer in both finance and amour, is punished at last for his piracies, and how suffering awakens his better nature, and how, in the end, he becomes a very gentle and kindly man, with hair that is "gray, even to the whiteness of snow." "ROBIN HOOD'S BARN," by Alice Brown (*Macmillan*), is chiefly notable for its truly awful illustrations. Taking one year with another, these eyes probably rest upon 2,500 novel illustrations per annum—2,500 pictures of heroes seven feet in height making love to super-Billie Burkes and beyond-Maxine Elliotts. I am thus not unduly sensitive to bad drawing: long use has made me view it tolerantly. But for all that comfortable toughness, I still jump an inch or two when I alight upon anything as bad as the picture facing page 190 in Miss Brown's book. And the one facing page 220 is even worse! It is next to impossible, with such ghastly caricatures of them before one's eyes, to take a civilized interest in the love affair of Alaric Stayson, the brilliant young biographer, and Miss Adelaide Wickham, daughter to the late Gilead Wickham, the notorious money baron.



GATHERING LAURELS

During the past year THE SMART SET has been gathering laurels unto itself as a unique magazine for those who desire to keep abreast and ahead of modern literary currents.

Boston Transcript,
Jan. 17, 1914.

TO gather laurels is one thing; to publish a successful magazine is quite another thing. For no magazine is really successful unless sufficient readers bring to it that support which gives a fair return on the investment. THE SMART SET has always been a financial as well as a literary success, the past year proving no exception.

But a magazine must progress; otherwise it surely decays, becomes a worriment to the publisher, an annoyance to its readers, and ends in futility. For this reason, during the year 1913, we experimented along a somewhat new and advanced line. In the April issue we stated our belief that a magazine which would succeed with the better class of readers, seeking quality and not mere quantity in its subscriptions, must stand for truth in its delineation of the drama of human life.

As this is an age of increasing frankness in the discussion of matters hitherto generally avoided, we came out in behalf of a generous freedom in literary expression. We further stated at that time that our stories need not strive to point a bourgeois moral; that virtue must not necessarily triumph over vice; and that there must not necessarily be a happy ending, for the great moving stories of life often end in disaster.

In the desire to make a magazine of high quality, the work of the leading writers of England and the Continent was sought out. Brieux, Strindberg, Schnitzler, Wedekind, D'Annunzio, George Moore, Frank Harris, Maarten Maartens, Leonard Merrick—these were some of the foreign authors of distinction who became contributors. In deference to what some regard as a very important present-day tendency, we published many strong and realistic stories told as they would actually happen in real life, regardless of whether the final outcome were cheering or depressing. In prose and verse alike we encouraged the new schools, and a distinctly modern touch

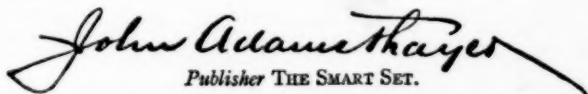
was given to the magazine. In other words, THE SMART SET essayed to be unafraid, unhampered by prejudice, and to keep abreast and even ahead of the prevailing tendencies in literature.


This course won us the strong approval of many well-known authors and literary critics. Eminent men who merely dipped into other magazines read THE SMART SET from cover to cover. Our poetry, always of genuine worth, last year attained a very high standard. In his last annual anthology of magazine verse, William Stanley Braithwaite credits THE SMART SET with forty-nine poems of distinction, as against thirty in *Scribner's* and *The Century* respectively, and twenty-nine in *Harper's*.

BUT—together with this academic approval we have received stout protests. Many of our most valued readers have written us that they did not like the innovation; some of the stories, though written by distinguished English, Continental and American authors, have struck them as too sombre; the frankness of certain others has displeased them. In short, we have been too serious as regards the relation of literature to life.

We admit a certain force in the criticism, and so, while modestly wearing the bays we have gathered during the past year, we announce, not a less discriminating realism in such realistic stories as we may publish, but a good round measure of romantic and humorous relief to the end that our friends, old and new, may find in us that variety they ask of a magazine which, above all, seeks to entertain. We shall continue to make our appeal especially to the well-educated, thinking, appreciative, alert-minded class of Americans who like fiction with a little tang to it; who relish a bit of subtlety now and then; who like to be surprised; who enjoy stories of ideas; stories with a strong dramatic flavor; stories containing an occasional thrill; in a nutshell, stories different from those found in the usual magazine.

There are thousands upon thousands of such readers in this country—readers to whom the word “smart” in its best sense of acuteness, nimble-mindedness, up-to-dateness, makes a strong appeal—yet who are not ultra in any respect. These are the readers we want, even though they may not be ahead of modern literary currents. We shall be satisfied if they are merely abreast—with us.


Publisher THE SMART SET.

 See the announcement of the April number on the pages following table of contents in this issue.